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EDITORIAL NOTES

I HAD been meaning to write something about freedom and the law of libel, and found myself diverted at the outset by a sudden outburst of controversial talk in which every man and woman in the country took a part. Day after day it went on, and it seemed that nobody could discuss or think of anything else. The King's problem had become everybody's problem. Now it was the monarch, now it was the man, whose "freedom" or lack of freedom was the subject of passionate argument. One became aware, in a strange, unprecedented way, of the constituted authority of the real powers that be—Church, politicians, Press—speaking with a single stern admonishing voice as with the sense that the very Ark of the Covenant were in their keeping; and whilst a kind of delicacy kept forty million people from pushing their forty million views beyond the stage of mere talk, *authority*, in public, had the first word and the last.

And so, having started out to postulate the desirableness of Freedom, I am checked by the obvious reflection that no two people mean the same thing by it. All the major troubles of the world turn upon the interpretation of the word, and the desirableness or otherwise of what it used to connote. Germany freed from the shackles of Versailles, and her free-thinkers under detention. Freedom in relation to Russia, Italy, Abyssinia, Spain. Freedom of speech in France, where M. Salengro was hounded to death by ruthless detraction, and in the United States, where gossip could tear to shreds the character of this person and that. And here, where our freedom has been asserted by proxy under the forms and hushed ritual of our democracy, we find supreme rule symbolized in the person of one to whom freedom is denied.

THE LAW OF LIBEL

There is no Absolute Freedom, and in any sense of the term excess may be harmful. This is illustrated forcibly in the case of

the law of libel. At this moment two democratic countries, France and Britain, are preparing new legislation, apparently in opposite directions, the one to restrict freedom of writing, the other to increase it. Both changes can be justified. In France the freedom with which some sections of the Press indulge in any sort of scandalous talk and scurrility at the expense of public men has become an intolerable abuse. Here, on the other hand, when the author of a book or an article has unwittingly and without malice written something that may be damaging to someone, or alleged to be damaging, he or his editor or publisher or printer may be sued for libel and mulcted in damages often capriciously and extravagantly assessed. So uncertain is the operation of the law that editors and publishers naturally shrink from taking risks; and many things that ought to be said are never said.

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Some considerable changes undoubtedly ought to be made in the direction of relaxing the law of libel. Yet it would be a mistake to go too far. At a meeting recently held to discuss the question Mr. J. B. S. Haldane said that "truth is a fairly tough thing," and that we could do with "a good deal more ridicule and a spot more hatred and contempt." Truth, I agree, is likely to come out when discussion is free; but to what extent, even in Britain, can discussions in the Press be regarded as wholly free when three or four men control a majority of the newspapers which circulate in this country? If you control journals selling in millions, it is terribly easy to get away with a falsehood, at any rate for long enough to be dangerous. If at a meeting of the National Council for Civil Liberties one member were indiscreet enough to slander another, no doubt other members of the Council would speedily redress the balance and no harm would be done. But if a small army of gossip-writers, employed by one big controller of newspapers, were turned on to say what they liked about a politician in a general election, that would not help to clarify the electoral issue. That can and sometimes does happen in France, and it does not promote the cause of truth. Therefore in that country it is becoming even more necessary to tighten up the law of libel than it is for us to relax it.

DR. GOEBBELS AND THE CRITICS

It is a far cry from the relatively mild restrictions of the libel law in England to the latest veto on free discussion issued by Dr. Goebbels in Germany. At a festival sitting of the Chamber of Culture he announced that henceforward no criticism of works of art,

literature, music, drama, or of the artists engaged for stage, cinema, or concert performances will be permitted. "The place of criticism is to be taken by objective analysis and description. A commentator must not say that a work of art is good or bad."

In the last sentence there is a certain saving grace. When Dr. Goebbels is self-complacent in his crude *obiter dicta* about art and criticism, it is well to remind ourselves of the beam in our own eye. Do not let us imagine there are no prohibitions in England, or that all critics, even in some of the highly respected journals of this country, are encouraged to say the whole of what they think. Every intelligent reader of reviews in daily, evening, and Sunday papers knows that the reviewers are not prone to err on the side of censoriousness. The danger here is not that "real genius [to use the words of Dr. Goebbels] should be tormented and tortured by ephemeral criticisms," but that ephemeral criticism should discover a genius at every turn, and that every clever exploiter of popular taste should be warmly commended to the attention of an all too willing public. The result of the indiscriminate paeans of praise which are encouraged and even required in some contemporary journals is not merely that the populace is confirmed in its choice of the meretricious, but that real talent gets less than its due; even if praised, the praise has lost its value. The chorus of commendation which acclaims the mediocre is a persistent handicap to real talent. Genius is tormented not by direct abuse but by the babble of eulogy bestowed on false literature, and the consequent degradation of the language of eulogy. Dr. Goebbels' rule that commentators shall not say that works of art are good or bad is no worse, is even better, than a rule that they may only say that they are good.

However, we have only ourselves to blame if we choose to read the review pages of journals which call all works masterpieces. Here at least it is not the Government that imposes a ban on adverse criticism; and there are open to us other journals where free criticism is permitted. But Dr. Goebbels speaks for the State. Henceforward no more criticism—no praise or blame—no investigation of what may be true or not true, genuine or spurious.

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His words have a certain ingenuousness about them. He speaks as one who believes that in suppressing free criticism he is relieving the creative artist of a noxious enemy. He makes the old popular mistake of supposing that the creative writer and the critic are in the nature of things opposed, the latter being a "scribbling grumbler" preferring to judge what he is unable to create. He

forgets that some of the greatest critics of poetry have themselves been poets. "Not every critic of art is a genius," said Lessing; "but every genius is born a critic of art." And it was another countryman of his, Schlegel, who said that literature "is the comprehensive essence of the intellectual life of a nation."

The artist does not live in a world apart, spinning masterpieces out of his entrails. His subject-matter is the world of his experience, which includes his impressions of all that is happening around him and the accumulation of ideas which he has absorbed in his education, his reading, and all his contacts with history, art, and life. His own creative effort begins in his own critical attitude to the procession of ideas which constitutes his world; he is a sharer in the intellectual life of a nation which becomes vigorous in proportion as the stir of ideas, the active give and take, the bandying to and fro of the ball of thought from mind to mind go on freely and incessantly. The critic is not his enemy. If he is functioning as he should do, he too is engaged in the "intellectual life of a nation," endeavouring to see as the artist has seen, to disentangle from his work what is significant and relevant to the larger issues, to give currency, as Arnold said, to the best ideas and create an atmosphere favourable to the birth of art.

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Without criticism of life there is no art, and without criticism of art there is no appreciation, and this two-fold critical attitude contains the stimulus on which all creative effort depends. To destroy free criticism is to sterilize the soil out of which literature grows. The spectacle of Dr. Goebbels standing up to inform the people of Germany—the country which produced the critical writings of Winckelmann, Lessing, Goethe, the Schlegels, Schiller—that the integrity of her artistic honour is to be preserved by banning the critics is enough to make the all too few poets and artists of Germany turn in their graves. His prohibition will surely provoke from his countrymen the silent comment that he bans the praise and blame of critics because most of the praise, so far as it is genuine, would be given to Germans who are compelled, or choose, to live in exile. It is disturbing to see the spokesman of a great intellectual nation complacently announcing its cultural suicide.

R. A. SCOTT-JAMES

THE THREE BUSHES

By W. B. Yeats

(An incident from the *Historia mei Temporis* of the
Abbé Michel de Bourdeille)

SAID lady once to lover
"None can rely upon
A love that lacks its proper food;
And if your love were gone
How could you sing those songs of love?
I should be blamed, young man."
 O my dear, O my dear.

"Have no lit candles in your room,"
That lovely lady said,
"That I at midnight by the clock
May creep into your bed,
For if I saw myself creep in
I think I should drop dead."
 O my dear, O my dear.

"I love a man in secret,
Dear chambermaid," said she,
"I know that I must drop down dead
If he stop loving me,
Yet what could I but drop down dead
If I lost my chastity?"
 O my dear, O my dear.

"So you must lie beside him
And let him think me there,
And maybe we are all the same
Where no lit candles are,
And maybe we are all the same
That strip the body bare."
 O my dear, O my dear.

And no dogs barked though midnights chimed
And at night time would she say,
"That was a lucky thought of mine
My lover looks so gay."
But heaved a sigh if the chambermaid
Looked half asleep all day.
 O my dear, O my dear.

THE THREE BUSHES

“No, not another song,” said he,
 “Because my lady came
 A year ago for the first time
 At midnight to my room,
 And I must lie between the sheets
 When the clock begins to chime.”
O my dear, O my dear.

“A laughing, crying, sacred song,
 A leching song,” they said.
 Did ever men hear such a song?
 No, but that day they did.
 Did ever man ride such a race?
 No, not until he rode.
O my dear, O my dear.

But when his horse had put its hoof
 Into a rabbit hole
 He dropped upon his head and died.
 His lady saw it all
 And dropped and died thereon, for she
 Loved him with her soul.
O my dear, O my dear.

The chambermaid lived long and took
 Their graves into her charge,
 And there two bushes planted
 That when they had grown large
 Seemed sprung from but a single root
 So did their roses merge.
O my dear, O my dear.

When she was old and dying,
 The Priest came where she was;
 She made a full confession.
 Long looked he in her face,
 And O, he was a good man
 And understood her case.
O my dear, O my dear.

He bade them take and bury her
 Beside her lady's man,
 And set a rose-tree on her grave.
 And now none living can
 When they have plucked a rose there
 Know where its roots began.
O my dear, O my dear.

TWO POEMS

By Jack Lindsay

THE FOREST-HERMIT

THE names are worn away upon his prayers
like statues faceless from the rounding rain.
Somewhere there is a world, but all his cares
are for the swallows coming back again,

the sorrel at the clearing's edge, the mole
heaving the sifted soil beside the pine.
Tormentedly he came to save his soul,
searching the fiery heavens for a sign,

and now his soul is lost, gone utterly,
and he has gained the living earth instead.
His signs are blossom-scrolled on bush and tree,
his only Mass with wind and sun is said.

Sometimes he wakens and beholds the moon
with quick thin clouds in gusty lustre rent,
or stands unmoving where the heavy noon
brightens the shade with snowing cherry-scent,

and all the world grows hollow like a bell
that strikes a single and unceasing chime
sweetly, and while he listens, all is well,
and while he listens there is no more Time.

WINTER MORNING

THE sleepy rooks have not yet risen, snuggling
in the main rookery, but the sun is up,
an orange cloud-smear; and on the furrowed field,
heeling lines of black, is dusted fine snow,
a spread of billows foambreaking, frozen unyielding.
This is the winter-world that my senses know,
taut with repentance, where the summer sap
of bright action withdraws to the roots below
and only brittle snow festoons the iron twig.

But the slugabed rooks are stirring, a trickle
of song falls on bare boughs, a promise of mating,
a memory of lost summers. There is no remorse,
for frost here does what intricate sorrows do
in the human heart, a destroying or cleansing force.
The rooks go visiting, each rook is true
to the tree where he nested last, where returning heat
will lead him love-loud to nest once more. I too
remember an old comfort, but I wear heavier shackles.

THE SHAPELY SKELETON

By John Pudney

HE soared against the yielding air.
He leant into the sky.
On earth the blossom spikes of spring
Have scorched his inner eye.
His teeth have burst the summer fruit
And let the teeming waste
Of the abundant juices scald
His understanding taste.
His flesh, which was as foliage,
Which was as fine and firm
As lustre on a holly leaf,
Is gutted with the worm.

It was a worm of discontent
With sap and sun and blood;
A worm with eager sightless eyes
Crept to him from the mud:
A worm that neither soared with song
Nor praised the lark-loud air:
But conned his shapely skeleton
Till the white bones were bare.

REVOLT

By Richard Church

THE interminable structure of words
Occupies a poet's life.
He grows old, grows blind,
Loses reality, goes secretly mad,
Scorns the easy singing of the birds,
Preferring the music of his weary mind,
Confusing thus the joyous with the sad,
And peace with strife.

Why should he adulterate his heart
With reason, and cloud his sense
Thereby? Let the wise fool
Forget his shrewd grammarian's part
And all the subtle science of the tense,
Learning to live and sing by rule
Of chance, the other man's wife.

ONCE MORE TO J. M.

By A. S. J. Tessimond

YOU move with the pride, the elegance, the curved neat finish of
the cat.

You move with the improvident pattern of the swallow.

You pass through crowds as easily as a swimmer through a summer
sea:

Afterwards, you shake them from you as a swimmer shakes off the
spray.

You drink the moment and throw away the glass and laugh among
the splinters.

You breathe without reservation. You walk without looking
backwards.

You ride on the bright-painted horses and cry to them "faster,
faster!"

And yet you are also the watcher who sees that the course is a circle,

Who waits till the riders are tired, the dust has settled,
Who waits and smiles.

THE POWER OF MUSIC

By Robert Nichols

IN the early summer of 1928 a youth of gentle appearance and studious habit, standing in the little music-shop of his native Scarborough, opened a vocal score and read as follows:

*"O Zarathustra! Beyond good and evil found we our island and our green meadow
—we two alone! Therefore must we be friendly to each other!"*

It was hardly to be expected that a young provincial organist—for such was the young man's profession—should be acquainted with the philosophic poetry of Neitzsche however different from the generality of his kind in musical tastes, general culture, and personal temperament he might be. And Mr. Fenby* was different, very different. To begin with, he really loved music for its own sake: that is to say, he loved it with a selfless and stubborn passion seldom to be discovered in those whom circumstances compel to find in its pursuit some sort of means of livelihood more or less congenial to the taste. Further, his technical proficiency was altogether above the average and the more so since his mastery had the quality of habit characteristic of one almost entirely self-taught. Finally, he was a spiritual eclectic. "Years before" he had not so much as heard the name of the composer printed upon the cover of the vocal score, over which, oblivious of all else, he was now poring, his "deepest feelings had found utterance in the music of Palestrina, Vittoria, Mozart, and Elgar," an unusual assortment in so young a musician, however erudite, but one from which it might be inferred that he did not merely play the organ for believers but was himself devout. Mr. Fenby was, in fact, a fast Christian, whose faith sprang neither from habit nor an act of will. For just as some men are born pale-face, some yellow, some mahogany, and some pitch-black, so there are souls born naturally Christian and, whether their practice be formal or fervent, Christian the religion must be. Fenby's practice was fervent, being founded in the certainties of a profound mysticism, sustained by acts of contemplation, undertaken according to the precepts of Ruysbroeck, and enriched by reveries upon the Music of the Future, that music which, helping us "to forget the misery of this our exile," could, he thought, scarcely be other than "the music of Eternal Life." Accordingly, Mr. Fenby did not so much

* *Delius as I Knew Him*. By Eric Fenby. Bell, 8s. 6d.

concern himself with the verbal text as permit the music to have its way with him. This was the easier since the music so struck him to the heart that he could scarcely think of anything else for days. Nor was this to be wondered at: the score between his hands was *The Mass of Life*, the greatest choral work of the last half-century and the supreme masterpiece, as it is the *magnum opus*, of Frederick Delius.

Mr. Fenby wandered home. Mr. Fenby did what other young men have done and will, it is hoped, do so long as the heat of youthful hearts can prompt a pen. A few days later Mr. Fenby was privileged to receive a cordial reply to his "sympathetic and appreciative letter" which had given "the greatest pleasure." Thereafter the young organist lost his peace of mind. "To be a genius, as this man plainly was, and have something beautiful in you and not to be able to rid yourself of it because you could no longer see your score paper and no longer hold your pen—well, the thought was unbearable! I remember how, with my dog, Peter, I walked for miles one stormy day on the cliffs, reflecting on the helplessness and misery of the man." So unbearable did the thought of Delius's plight become that the "conceit" of proffering his services as amanuensis "chased" the young man "like some Hound of Heaven," and neither the most violent exercise upon the windiest cliffs nor even the company of Peter could make it turn tail. The power of music is prodigious, and, when the strains of Orpheus are reinforced by the pleadings of the Saints, may well become formidable. Mr. Fenby suffered from insomnia. At last, getting up in the middle of the night he "took pen and paper" and wrote to Delius "offering his help for three or four years." "I would do anything to be the means of finishing that music and, provided that any suggestion was acceptable to him at all, I felt certain that I could succeed in my purpose. How it was going to be done—well, God alone knew the answer to that."

It would appear that the deity was well-informed and entertained no misgivings as to the result of seconding a true servant of Christ in the service of a pagan Orpheus. The postman knocked; a letter with a French stamp, postmarked Grez sur Loing, skittled into the box and Mr. Fenby, tearing the envelope open in solitude, discovered that his suggestion was acceptable and that the most convenient manner of reaching Grez "would be to travel from London during the night." Mr. Fenby's God was right. No ill after-effects appear to have accrued from methods which to profane eyes appear no little singular. Mr. Fenby, still of the orthodox faith, has fully vindicated his youthful confidence in his

own capacities and the omniscience of his deity. He has proved his Christian fortitude under the most trying circumstances and—an agreeable by-product—has acquired a well-earned stool at the feet of the great in the musical Pantheon. The world is the richer for the beautiful *Songs of Farewell*, some lesser works, and these reminiscences. Nonetheless, the reader, after congratulations to all concerned in these remarkable transactions, cannot but pause to wonder whether, when Mr. Fenby has preluded Hymn number 373 Ancient and Modern upon the organ, he does not feel a certain sense of oppression, almost of nightmare, as the choir declares how his deity “works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.”

For it is to be accounted among the most bizarre results of genius in all the history of music that this young man should have become the instrument whereby the composer of *The Mass of Life* was enabled to realize on paper at least some of the music which yet murmured in him. No reader of any sensibility, above all no reader who sympathizes with the devotion of youth to a transcendent cause or personality can read the story of Mr. Fenby's tribulations, technical and psychological, unmoved. “Against the great superiority of another,” says Goethe, “there is no remedy but love.” One of the major curiosities of this very curious narrative is that the love seems to have been evoked almost entirely by the music as opposed to the man, despite the fact that in probably no other modern composer is the artist's mode of feeling and thinking so entirely his own and integral with the man, as in the case of Delius. There are, of course, musical influences—Chopin, Greig, Wagner. (Mr. Fenby quite correctly warns us against attaching too much importance to them.) But Delius, as a man, owed little to others. Quite rightly Mr. Fenby is at pains to emphasize that the composer was far from well-read. For Delius's range was at once sporadic and circumscribed. The present writer remembers him speaking of Goethe, Whitman, Jacobsen, Gottfried Keller, Nietzsche—above all Nietzsche—Verlaine, and Strindberg. But never of any great Greek nor Shakespeare or any famous Russian, French, or English novelist. Of the bulk of our poetry—the greatest and most various of any nation save the Chinese—he was astonishingly ignorant. In sculpture, architecture, biography, politics, exploration, science, philosophy, he seemed to take little, if any, interest. Modern painting—he possessed Gauguin's famous *Nevermore*—made a certain appeal to him, an appeal partly due, perhaps, to the fact that his wife was a painter. But the present writer never heard him mention an old Master. In the words of Mr. Fenby, “as Delius he began and as Delius he ended.”

It is therefore the more remarkable—above all when we find Mr. Fenby quoting with approval Goethe's "to be able to do something you must be something"—that Mr. Fenby, so intimate with the composer's deeds (that is, his compositions), should frequently appear so much at sea as to the substance of the very thoughts and feelings which prompted that music and sprang from his being, a being by no means narrow (as the variety of feeling in his compositions proves), but a being singularly little modified by any influences save the growth of his apprehension of man's place in nature and his meditations upon Nietzsche. The fact is that Mr. Fenby, by reason of his religious faith, approached the master with preconceived notions as to the character of the universe and man's place in it. He does not conceal—there is no reason he should—that he suffered severely during his sojourn, which on and off lasted nearly six years—at Grez. That, so youthful and so sensitive, Mr. Fenby should have persisted in his task, is greatly to his honour. But the piteousness of his narrative and the very real value of the services he rendered, should not blind us to the spiritual gulf between the pair.

We have not to read far before Mr. Fenby gives evidence of that gulf and of his misapprehension. Some twenty-four hours after his arrival at Grez the young organist sat opposite the composer while a record of *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* was being played. Watching the composer, Mr. Fenby thought he detected a "curious otherworldliness" possess the great man. "With his head thrown back, and swaying to the rhythm, he seemed to be seeing with those now wide but unseeing eyes, and his spirit ebbed and flowed with the rise and fall of his music." Inspired by this intimate spectacle and by these strains—"never had Goossens' oboe playing seemed so magical!"—Mr. Fenby gave rein to his thoughts and found them chime very consonantly with his own aspirations. "There was nothing of the quietist's surrender to idle activity here, nor the sensualist's love of mere sound, but a continued reaching out of himself. A great mystic has said that "God is an ocean that ebbs and flows," and no words are truer than those of great music. "It is only when we are unconscious of the pulse of Time that we can aspire through goodness to be at one with Things Eternal," etc., etc.

So true it is that the lyre of Orpheus, held shoulder-high, conceals his face from his followers.

For as one whom the composer honoured with some intimacy of thought, the present writer cannot but hazard that the "otherworldliness" of Delius was of a very different cast to that posited

by Mr. Fenby. The "otherworldliness" of Delius was rather the otherworldliness of the ancient Chinese poet with his long memory of things mortal than the otherworldliness of the Christian poet with his immortal hope. It was, in fact, from some severely exalted station in Memory, which for the pagan is alone outside Time, and not from some region where man is "unconscious of its pulse," that Delius "reached out of himself" *not* to aspire "through goodness to be at one with Things Eternal," but through a passionate sense of the beauty of things temporal to possess to the full—howsoever briefly—the mysterious felicity of one moment in time, that moment, for instance, when, halting beneath new-fledged trees by the river-side, a man no longer young hears once again the haunting cry of the first cuckoo in spring.

This minor, though very beautiful, work of Delius is indeed exceedingly typical of the composer since the thoughts and feelings aroused in him by nature and by man and man's place in nature and time are his supreme subjects and the idyll the form his genius found most favourable for the expression of them. That expression is seldom so tranquil as in this piece, the tranquillity of which springs from the fact that his brooding felicity is not, as in so many of his longer works (for instance, *Koanga*, *The Village Romeo and Juliet*, *Sea-Drift*, and *Brigg Fair*), intensified by passionate human love and troubled by thoughts of lasting separation. For it is precisely when the emotion evoked by love and loss makes man most conscious of his place in time and nature that the music of Delius achieves its most personal poignancy. That poignancy is largely due to the double vision of the tone-poet, a vision which assures that, while he feels an intense, passionate, and tender sympathy for the emotions of love and loss in the individual, he should also love nature with so severe, exalted, and imperturbable a love as whole-heartedly to accept and appreciate her laws. For, like Keats, Delius was firmly persuaded that "Nature never did betray the heart that loved her." Certainty in this faith, the present writer believes, prompted the welcome Delius accorded to two quotations uttered on my last but one visit to Grez. It was an evening in early summer and we—Delius, an American gentleman, and myself—were seated looking down the narrow strip of walled garden that led down to the lofty alders above the river. The American had seen fit suddenly to declare his fear of death much mitigated by a belief in the personal immortality of his own soul. His discourse appeared to me as ill-timed as his arguments were specious, and a sidelong glance at Delius persuaded me that the composer was irked by it. When, therefore, the American halted I drew attention to the

sighing of the alders and, speaking of the peace that surrounded us, quoted Meredith's "*Into the heart that bears the rose shall I with shuddering fall?*" Delius roused. "That's very beautiful," he said. But the American was not appeased. I had no mind to see Delius subjected to what I could not but regard as further impertinences, and I therefore animadverted on Goethe's *Rhapsody on Nature*. It appeared to be unknown to the composer, and since I always carry it with me, I hastened into the house and, returning, read him some extracts:

She creates new forms without end: what exists now never was before, what was, comes not again; all is new and yet ever the old. . . . Individuality appears to be all her aim, and she cares nought for individuals. . . . She is eternally changing; not for a moment does she stand still. For to all stagnation she has affixed her curse. . . . The meaning of the whole she keeps to herself, and no man may learn it of her. Who does not see her everywhere sees her nowhere right. The drama she plays is always new because the spectators are always new. Life is her finest invention and Death her device for having life more abundantly. In her everything is always present. Past and Future she knows not. The Present is her eternity. I praise her with all her works. She is wise and silent. She has placed me in this world. And she will lead me out of it.

The American appeared astonished. It was plain he could make nothing of that majestic hymn. But Delius turned his head toward me and said with great gravity, "That is Goethe all over: a deep and wise nature which sees into the very foundation of things." And with that he motioned to the German attendant, who lifted him from his chair and carried him into the house.

So much in elucidation of what the present writer takes to have been Delius's attitude to nature. That attitude chimes ill with Mr. Fenby's notions. And as Mr. Fenby is much at sea regarding Delius's attitude to the life of nature, so he is in poor plight to understand Delius's attitude toward the life of man. He stresses and rightly stresses, Nietzsche's extraordinary influence on Delius. That influence can, indeed, hardly be too heavily stressed. Mr. Fenby had but to make some genuine effort to understand Nietzsche—above all *Zarathustra*—and many, if not all, his major difficulties would have disappeared. But of that effort Mr. Fenby appears to have been incapable. Delius presented him with a copy of *Zarathustra*. "I did not get along very well with *Zarathustra*. I was prejudiced before I started, for it was my misfortune to come across some of Nietzsche's music. Whatever he may have been as a philosopher, whatever he may have been as poet, the Rev. John Bacchus Dykes was a veritable Mozart compared with Nietzsche

as a composer. Since then I have never been able to take the fellow seriously." This incapacity to take Nietzsche seriously does not, however, prevent Mr. Fenby speaking of Nietzsche as "poison" to the soul of Delius, a judgment the more curious since *Thus Spake Zarathustra* is fundamentally religious. Nor is this religious spirit new. If Mr. Fenby "could not get along very well with *Zarathustra*," he might have opened his Blake:

Thou art a man. God is no more
Thine own humanity learn to adore.

But Mr. Fenby, beside being orthodox and a mystic, is an Englishman. And it is a curious fact that the English to this day baulk at reading in a foreign revolutionary—and particularly in Nietzsche—what they make no bones about accepting as worthy of consideration, if not assent, in a native. Delius, a thorough Nietzschean, did not adore the human for what it is, but for what it might be. In the *Mass of Life* we have glimpses of what it might be, and indeed the work opens with a chorus invocative of the will to self-transcendence. The whole work is, in fact, an essay in the transvaluation of values and that transvaluation is accomplished even as one listens. It is accomplished in terms of beauty. This is natural since for Delius, as for Nietzsche (who was artist first and ethical teacher second), the justification of man, as of nature, is not in terms of goodness, but of beauty. Hence the vanity of many of Mr. Fenby's reproaches. "Would," he writes, "that together with the seeds of musical culture, Ward (an early teacher of Delius) could have sown but a few of Catholic culture, not so much as to make his pupil a Catholic, but at least a believer; for with belief would have come that joy which is not to be found in his music, and which constitutes its chief defect. What joy there is, is an echo through the ages of the joys of pagan antiquity—the joy of the gods, and the delight in all natural things before the world was born again. It is tinged with the sadness with which all joy must be tinged that is not born of that virtue which Christianity brought into the world—hope. And there is no hope in Delius's music." There is no "hope" because Delius, as Nietzsche, had no need of such hope as sustains Mr. Fenby. But Mr. Fenby is profoundly mistaken if he imagines that the world is not born again for such as Delius and Nietzsche, since to such natures the world is born again in the transvaluation achieved by every sunrise whether the sunrise be amongst lonely hills or in the lonely heart. For the notion of Christian joy, inspired by hopes of an "otherworldly" existence—become perfect when we have forgotten what Mr. Fenby calls "the



ROSAMOND LEHMANN
(December 1936)
by SAVA

misery of our exile"—there is substituted the felicity of our apprehension that existence has through beauty become so here, now, in the *present*. The ineffable music of the "Midday" idyll in the *Mass of Life* is a statement of that apprehension:

Hush! hush! Hath not the world grown perfect? What hath happened unto me? . . . Hark! hath time flown away? Do I not fall? Have I not fallen—hark! into the well of eternity?

"There are many," Mr. Fenby complains, "for whom this music is too much of the earth earthy." That earth was good enough for Delius, and by his vision in music of the transvaluation of values he has made it better for many others—if not for Mr. Fenby. Such persons do not need "a modern Palestrina to breathe into the voices of the modern orchestra the music of that joy of joys, that blessed felicity which could transport us with an earthly tasting of eternal bliss." Theirs, as they listen to the music of the *Mass of Life*, are other aspirations, such aspirations as bring to the lips this prayer "*Make me beautiful as thou art, O my happiness!*"



Wood engraving by AMY F. GREEN

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THE SUITCASE

By Bruno Frank

TRANSLATED BY BARBARA HALLEWELL

HE watched her disappearing down the platform, watched her energetic tread which was still young and elastic but no longer elegant—rather homely she looked. She turned round once more to wave to him, with a smile, then he saw her held up for a moment at the barrier before she was lost amongst the crowd on the other side.

He took his seat and before the train drew out of the station spread out his papers on the table before him.

He had the carriage to himself. When he looked up from time to time from his work, his eye rested on a dreary Prussian landscape in the grey light of a November afternoon. A pale red glow fast fading behind a low line of hills told of approaching darkness. The train slowed down at a level crossing, and he noticed a shabby little car waiting at the gates, as fantastic a bit of scrap iron as ever adorned an American comedy. This set him thinking of his own car at home. It really was time he sold it and treated himself to an up-to-date one. In any case, he told himself, he might have looked round the showrooms before now and tried out some of the latest models. But he remembered that his practical, perhaps rather too practical, wife did not consider that they were justified in buying a new car yet. He turned back to his papers.

When he reached his destination it was dark, and there were not enough porters to go round. He kept his brief-case under his arm whilst he watched his trunk and his small suitcase being piled on to an already overloaded trolley and pushed towards the barrier.

The hotel was a good distance from the station. It was theatre time, and all Berlin's millions of people seemed bent on pleasure. The traffic moved at a crawl, and it looked as though every available car had been pressed into service. Of all the women in furs and jewels whom he glimpsed through the windows of the dimly lighted saloon cars, there was not one but appeared beautiful and glamorous.

Once every two months he drove through these evening streets from the station to the hotel. Every detail of the drive was imprinted on his memory, and he knew in advance each time just what his reaction would be. He always had to ask himself, and to-day was

no exception, whether it was right that he should spend his remaining years all those dark miles away in a provincial town, whilst life glowed here in such rich colours. A successful business man, at peace with the world, living in a sort of mental torpor, obediently following the path which was marked out for him—thus he saw himself, and he could not help feeling that at forty-five he should not have been content to settle down in a rut like that.

And so he reached the hotel. They knew him there and had his usual room ready for him—a large, quiet, double room. A heavy curtain could be drawn in front of the two beds, transforming it into a sitting-room, where he could work or receive his business friends if he so wished.

He signed the register, his luggage was brought up, and then he was alone. He would have to make an early start the next morning, so he decided to go to bed early.

He opened the suitcase and drew back in amazement, for on the top lay a dark green silk garment which did not belong to him. He realized with annoyance that he had been given the wrong suitcase—one misses little articles of personal use when one is no longer so very young. Summing up the position quickly in his mind, he decided that it was not really serious. He had had some money in the lid of his case, but not more than he could afford to lose. All his papers were in his brief-case, though as a matter of fact he admitted to himself that he would almost rather have lost his papers than his nail-brush and his slippers and his shaving tackle—and in any case it did not please him to think of all these personal possessions under the gaze of a stranger at this very moment, and of a woman at that, for this case belonged to a woman. A delicate, fastidious perfume emanated from the dark green silk.

He closed the case again, just for curiosity. It really was exactly like his own—the same shiny brown leather, the same size, even the same silver-plated locks. The porter couldn't be blamed. Anyway, he supposed they would be able to rectify the mistake at the station. He would send the case back there immediately, the lady would surely do the same, and all would be well. He had already put out his hand to ring for a porter, but he let it fall to his side again. There was another way. Perhaps he could find her name and address somewhere in the case—her card, or an envelope addressed to her. A faint trace of her perfume still hung in the air. He opened the case again, and at once the perfume was all around him.

He lifted out the dark green silk dressing gown which lay on top, taking care not to disturb its folds. He stood there with the flimsy

thing resting across his outstretched arms, and the daintiest of travelling outfits lay exposed to his gaze.

Truly, he thought, women were of a more delicate breed than men and lived more delicately. He was ashamed to think of the contents of his own suitcase, which was probably being opened at this moment in another hotel room. She would be shocked, even perhaps a little disgusted. He could imagine her drawing back. There was nothing wrong with his things, of course, they were quite good, but mostly old and used and very ordinary and practical. On top, he hated the thought, lay his old black leather slippers, worn and shapeless and rubbed shiny inside, and next to them the shaving brush which he could not bring himself to throw away, in spite of its advanced state of baldness. And that wooden nail-brush which a moment ago had seemed more important than many a paper in his brief-case, that was on top too, and it too had seen better days. But the worst of all was his nightshirt, newly laundered, faultlessly ironed, but nevertheless a nightshirt, that inelegant but, alas! so comfortable symbol of a comfortable middle-class, about which he had for years been waging a friendly war with his launderer. "You know, sir," he could hear the man saying, "you're the last of my elegant customers to hold out against the pyjama!" Of course, the man was only flattering him—he wasn't really such an elegant customer, and as he stood there looking at her things, he was pained to think what her impression would be when she saw his nightshirt.

Her perfume filled the room. It was an expensive one, fresh, almost bitter—somehow it reminded him of the fragrance of her quick-breathing young mouth, and suggested a slim, athletic figure, strong, slender hands, a rounded, self-willed chin, light-coloured rather scornful eyes, and pale gold unruly hair falling over a courageous brow. Very well imagined—but supposing the case belonged to some fat old lady, or to a shrivelled old maid with a hooked nose? Ah no! he was sure it didn't!

He seemed bewitched. His emotions were strangely excited, and a slight dizziness came over him. What he was about to do was not quite correct, indeed he felt rather like a criminal. He went over to the door and locked it, very much as he might have locked himself in with the strange lady. He wanted to examine all her possessions, one by one, without interruption.

Dark green seemed to be her favourite colour, which met with his immediate approval. It went very well with the dark tortoiseshell of her brushes and combs and powder-box and her oval hand-mirror. All these shimmering things and also all her crystal

bottles were marked with a little golden monogram, an "M." Madge, Margaret, Mona—only English names seemed to describe her fresh, energetic youth. He found a novel bound in white, which she had probably read on the train. But there was no name, not a word to indicate who she might be.

Her little manicure case was in dark green. Her dainty slippers were of soft green leather, with swansdown round the edge. Taking them out, he was comforted to find that they were not quite new. They were a little worn on the insides where they had rubbed together as she walked, and the lining shone a little from contact with her bare feet.

Her nightdress, in a lighter shade of green silk, lay folded before him in the left-hand corner of the case. His launderer could have found no fault with that exquisite garment. The little creases in it told him that it had been worn. Then he came across a small box in dark green leather, which looked like a jewel case. The discovery impressed upon him the irregularity of what he was doing; his temples throbbed, but he enjoyed the guilty sensation.

He opened the little box, half fearing yet half hoping to disclose a collection of sparkling jewels. Was his honesty not being put to the test? He had no right to keep valuables for more than an hour without reporting them, yet he would hate the idea of giving up this precious find. He could picture it reposing forlornly on a shelf in the lost property office in unworthy company.

Great was his relief when he saw the contents of the box—modern necklaces and brooches made of metal and big, bold imitation stones such as are so much worn nowadays—a return to West African customs, he could hear himself saying—but that had been ridiculous of him, the fashion was an attractive one, gay and daring as it was, given the right type of woman; the charm and self-assurance of youth alone could justify this exotic masquerade. Whatever else he thought about these childish baubles, he was at least thankful that a man of his position need not feel like a thief for failing to report them.

It was very late before he could get to sleep, and then he slept badly.

The next morning he sent the hotel porter out to buy a few essential toilet articles, and at nine o'clock he left his room, locking the door carefully behind him. His business friends could not help noticing how absent-minded he was at their conferences, and once when he took out his handkerchief his neighbour was surprised by a waft of perfume. It was a tiny lawn handkerchief which had been taken out of a little collapsible leather handkerchief case.

Going up in the hotel lift that evening, his heart thumped as though in anticipation of a mistress awaiting him upstairs. He unlocked the door, switched on the light, and stood amazed. The maid had already prepared the room for the night, but not for him alone. Anxious to please, she had unpacked the little suitcase, which now stood empty on a chair. The tortoiseshell brushes and the crystal bottles were arrayed on the dressing-table, the dressing gown was draped across an armchair, the dividing curtain in front of the beds had been drawn back, and both beds were turned down ready for sleeping in. Beside the bed which had not been slept in, nearest the door, stood the dainty slippers, and on the pillow lay the sea-green gossamer nightdress. All these things seemed to be awaiting their mistress, and their mistress him.

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II

The moment in which he had failed to return the suitcase to the station had been his first act of unfaithfulness. He often heard his business friends, cigar in mouth, recounting with innocent cynicism the easy adventures which they always had during their stay in Berlin, and they spoke of them as though they were something to which every man became entitled after several years of marriage. He had never had the least desire to do as they did. He would have been repelled by the idea of going straight home from one of those little adventures, getting out of the train in his own provincial town, and kissing his wife gaily on the mouth as though nothing had happened. Nothing did happen to his business friends which they needed to forget. Something would have happened to him. His reserve was well known, it was indeed enough to have made a less respected and less important man look ridiculous.

No man could have had a happier marriage than he. His wife had been beautiful, and indeed she still was, in her dignified, charming way, although she had given him three sons of whom he was very proud. She was a perfect housewife, but she never talked about her work in the house—indeed she always knew how to be quiet at the right moment, though taking an intelligent and helpful interest in his business affairs. She was broadminded. She had a delightful sense of humour and she never behaved foolishly; she was sympathetic, but much too healthy to be sentimental; she was frank and open; susceptible to beauty, but never afraid to look the realities of life in the face. She was very popular and everybody who knew her thought her a fine woman; and so she was.

But the finest woman in the world is powerless to overcome the

distaste which a man at the turn of life often feels for the existence he has led till then. And so it was that he could scarcely bear to look ahead along the gradual uphill road on which his feet were set and which stretched out before him without side-track or cross-road until it lost itself somewhere in the darkness beyond.

There had been some critical moments in his life during the past few years of which nobody knew but himself. One of them had been on his fortieth birthday, just as he had risen, glass in hand, to thank them all for their good wishes. He had nearly made a most unexpected speech. For the space of a second he had been on the point of severing all the threads which bound him to the life he had loved till then—but when he had spoken, he had said just those things which they had expected him to say, and nothing more. Another moment was still very fresh in his memory. It was less than a year ago. They were on a winter holiday in Cairo, going through the gaudy, dirty crowd of the native quarter, when they came to a crooked alleyway leading off from the main street, and in its deep shadow he saw draped figures moving like phantoms. Quite suddenly and unexpectedly he had become possessed of an urgent desire to snatch himself away from the arm of his travel-dressed wife, to leave her without a word of farewell and rush headlong into that alleyway which was no different from dozens of others, to find his way along it until he emerged at the other end, to let himself be carried away on the great anonymous flood of the East, which had its beginnings there, let himself drift into the heart of Africa, mingle with the swarming millions of Asia, be swept on still farther, anywhere, as long as he were taken right away for ever from his respectable existence and his successful marriage. . . .

How many of us know that relentless urge! It buds in all souls with imagination and a consciousness of death, and perhaps most vigorously of all in men at the turn of life. It is rather a dissatisfaction with one's self than with one's surroundings, a longing to escape from the prison of one's own personality, a rebellion against being only one man from the cradle to the grave, when there are so many million ways of living! And since breed and blood are there and cannot be altered, the only escape lies in adventure, in the urge over strange lands and many-coloured seas, in the longing of the artist who finds his way in an ecstasy of suffering into the intimacies of another's face, in the flight of the world-weary into the dumb-cloistered stillness of La Trappe. This discontent, this sense of insufficiency it is which acts will-o'-the-wisp to every unfaithful deed, along all the cross-ways and side-paths of love.

The stranger, present only in her dainty and fragrant belongings, was a greater temptation to him than all the thousand women who offered themselves in the streets of the metropolis. He could not have spoken of this temptation to anybody. He realized how fantastic its sensual enchantment was in a man of his type—man of action, father of a family, keen and respected business man. He was ashamed, as he had not been ashamed since his boyhood, and the unusual emotion excited his senses and helped to ensnare him still more completely.

It occurred to him that the maid on his floor must be curious about the woman whose bed she prepared every night but whom she never saw. Meeting her on the corridor, he slipped a banknote into her hand, probably the biggest tip she had ever received. As she answered the pressure of his hand a sly, saucy smile spread over her face, the smile of an accomplice. He felt the blood rush to his face at this silent evidence of conspiracy, and even this last humiliation was sweet. He was always careful to keep his door locked and he carried the key about with him.

That evening he washed himself with the stranger's soap. It was his first physical approach to her, and it left him emotionally exhausted. The soap was a piece she had already used, but the name of an English firm could still be distinguished on it. The lather seemed to him whiter and frothier than any he had ever known, and the fresh, almost bitter fragrance of that same youthful perfume filled his bathroom. Now it rose to his nostrils from his own body, it clung all about him; and as he lay in bed it was almost as though her own sweet body lay in a light embrace upon his own.

This was the most intimate contact he ever had with her. He awoke the next morning knowing that he had to make an important decision. A crisis had arisen overnight. Lying on his back in bed, his arms resting beneath his head, his thoughts were with his wife, who was waiting for him all those miles away. He felt sorry for her, but he did not see how he could alter anything now. He had already stayed away longer than usual, and now, quite suddenly and definitely, he knew that he would stay away for ever. Nothing short of a miracle would be able to make him go back. Perhaps he almost hoped for that miracle to happen, but he did not see how it possibly could.

He dressed absentmindedly and then sat at the dressing-table and considered the practical side of the situation. He wanted to do the right thing. He despised those people who grew mean and selfish on the eve of a separation. He would be able to leave his family

independent and reasonably well off. It would be just as though he had died. Didn't men of forty-five die every day, hundreds of them? He had loyal colleagues who could run his business for him for many years to come. And before so very long his eldest boy, who showed promise, would be able to go into the business. But what about himself? Could he give up the work of a lifetime just like that? Didn't he care? Hadn't he been spending his time here in Berlin, bargaining and scheming and planning, all in the hope of securing some new advantage for his firm? He touched the long-familiar chord within him, but it no longer gave forth any sound.

All this time, without knowing it, he had been turning the little tortoiseshell mirror round and round in his hand—once he had caught sight of his own face in it, a lean, manly face with a generous mouth. Now, breaking off his train of thought, he noticed what he held in his hand, and at the same moment he realized to his astonishment that the pretty thing had lost its power. The same applied to all the other delightful feminine possessions in green and shimmering brown—they had ceased to exist for him, they had been no more than an excuse, an occasion. He had imagined that he wanted this unknown woman, and all the time it had been the great unknown for which he longed. He wanted his freedom back, wanted to be at liberty to make new decisions and to start all over again from the beginning.

He very rarely thought of his boyhood, but now there appeared before him one particular page of one of his school books, even to the blue pencil mark with which as a boy he had marked two particular lines of a particular poem, forgotten through thirty long years from that day to this, and now once more before his eyes:

And understand that Freedom means
To choose the way you go. . . .

III

He had dealt with all his business, but he still did not leave. He chose to see nobody, preferring to live alone with his thoughts. With the exception of two hastily scribbled postcards, he sent no word home.

One entire afternoon he had spent walking at a brisk pace up and down the snow-covered Tiergarten, and he did not return to his hotel until the light was fading. He found the key in his door—he had not been locking it for the past few days. Pushing it open, he felt at once that someone was in the room, and he held his breath in suspense until he heard a woman weeping, not loudly, but there

was no mistaking the sound. Switching on the lights, he saw his wife at the dressing-table, her forehead pressed against its glass top, amongst the array of tortoiseshell brushes and crystal bottles, her shoulders shaking as she sobbed. His first glance had taken in the whole room. It was prepared for the night. The green silk dressing-gown lay over the armchair, the gossamer nightdress was on the open bed, and the slippers seemed to be awaiting the stranger's bare feet.

Neither of them moved nor spoke. So she had come to fetch him home, as she had done once or twice before—without the slightest suspicion, of course, just to give him a pleasant surprise. She had simply asked for his room and let herself in. The shock must have been terrible for her. How long had she been cowering there? What had she endured? But the worst was that he could not explain, could not put it right. The truth was even worse than she believed. Her tears flowed for a phantom of her imagining; nothing had happened, and yet much more than she suspected. How was he to dismiss this terrible and grotesque scene from her mind without lying! And he must not lie. Facts had overtaken him, he must not hesitate, now was his opportunity, now at this very moment he must confirm her worst fears without trying to spare her feelings. Like a boy he would have to speak of the dark inner workings of his mind, of his unrest, of his lonely mental tortures and his longing to escape. To dismiss these realities of tortoiseshell and silk, he would have to confess that a great fear, a fear of life and of death, was forcing him at his age to take up his stick again and go forth. Yet was such a thing possible—to go forth and leave one's work, one's sons of whom one had hoped so much, the loyal, blameless wife of so many years? Possible or not, ridiculous or not, for him it had become a necessity, and only a miracle could hold him back.

And then she lifted her head, and he saw her face. A woman is not beautiful when she has been crying for hours, when horror and dismay have played havoc with her features. Her dark hair was untidy, a loose strand of it fell over her inflamed eyes. She pushed it back and looked at him. Her lips moved silently, and then at last her voice came, low and hoarse.

"Here in your hotel . . . she lives with you altogether. It's too awful. . . ."

Now, now would have been the moment to tell her everything, to finish it all in two final sentences; but he sought in vain, he could not find them. An unbearable pity had started to burn within him, and he said what any man would have said in his place:

"There has been no woman here."

She stood up and faced him across that room which spoke so eloquently of a love-night, and it seemed to him as though he could already hear her sarcastic laughter—but instead he saw the trouble ebbing from her face, saw something like the reflection of a smile shining through her tears.

"There hasn't?" he heard her ask. "Really?"

And he, incapable of answering otherwise,

"No. I swear it."

"Then I've been crying all for nothing!" he heard her glad voice. "Oh, thank God, thank God!" and she ran to him and took his hands in hers. He swayed a little. Something seemed to tear in his heart, painfully and unbearably sweet. It was the miracle.

She believed. All those tangible proofs under the glare of the electric light weighed as nothing against his word. The contents of the little suitcase, the possessions of the strange woman, she no longer saw them, for his words, which she believed, had robbed them of all meaning. She needed neither explanation nor proof.

The miracle of trust, the miracle of absolute unity—there it was, and the world had nothing greater to offer. And should he take up his stick and go forth again and wander over the face of the earth and experience all its wonders, should strength be granted to him to enjoy them until his last far day, Life, after this, would have nothing more to offer him, for its greatest experience had already been his.



THE DEATH OF KING ARTHUR

Wood engraving by ERIC KING. In the 17th Annual Exhibition of the Society of Wood-Engravers at the Redfern Galleries

ON ITALIAN LITERATURE AND OTHER THINGS

By Ignazio Silone*

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN BY ERIC MOSBACHER

A YOUNG Fascist writer who served voluntarily in the Abyssinian War has made a really important confession. In some correspondence which appeared in *Italia Letteraria* of April 19th last (Indro Montanelli, *Testimonianze della Guerra*) he wrote:

"In this war there are already a number of dead who died for the sake of conformity, I might almost say a number of artificial dead, dead who did not wish to live, or were not able to live; as if they thought, or rather felt, that death was the only way of paying off the moral debt contracted before the war.

" 'In one sense,' one of these men said to me a few days before he fell, 'in one sense we pledged ourselves not to return. In reality we started pledging ourselves at the age of fourteen or fifteen. It was a crescendo of words.'

"Then he fell silent, bored by words; and the silence seemed to clinch the pledges. We made no attempt to hide that we were awaiting the test of deeds.

"This war will bring many to maturity in the sense that in the future it will impel them to keep a more severe check on their words; many who, having pledged themselves not to return, will return. . . .

"This war would be infinitely easier if there were not behind us that signed promissory note which we will never in any way be able to meet. . . .

"I think that this war will turn out to have offered to those who have taken part in it a gift more precious than oil wells; namely the gift of a check on the written word, and still more on the printed word; a vigilant sense of responsibility for words. . . .

"Many Italians who are here to fight proclaim that they are here in order to demonstrate their conformity to all the world. I rarely found any who had had the 'formal' courage to state that they were here because their conscience demanded it. Conscience is a word that is beginning to disappear from ordinary language. Whether it be an effect of collectivism or whatever it may be, the aim to-day

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is to justify oneself in the eyes of society. It is a fashion. I myself have co-operated, within the modest limits of my modest authority, in launching this fashion of 'depersonalization.' I do this or that because I have to justify myself in the eyes of public opinion. I project myself without. There are things that I ought not to do, but how should I justify myself in the eyes of others if I did not do them? I have to do them all the same. There no longer exist my, thy, his duty. There exists Duty; a standardized imperative, which is the same for everybody: and diversity of interpretation is taboo. It is judgment made easy, as easy as the application of an article in the penal code. This is an impoverishment. . . .

"It would not be so if everyone confined his words to communion with himself. The habit of self-interrogation has been lost."

The quotation has been a rather long one, but it was worth bringing to your attention. This young author's confession has an importance that goes far beyond the field of literature; for it reveals a distortion typical of Italian society, which is tainted to the core with the ancient disease of rhetoric. Amid the superficial changes of regimes and governments the most prominent figure in the life of our country has always been that of the orator, and the supreme political art has been that of eloquence. When ecclesiastical preacher or government propagandist have proved inadequate, violence has invariably intervened on their behalf; invariably, even before the days of Fascism, in the so-called Liberal epoch. If you examine our cultural history, you will find that at bottom it is a picturesque tissue of magnificent but empty rhetoric and of refined brutality; from the time of the Jesuit *quaresimalisti* and the spies of the Inquisition up to Etcetera Etcetera with his blackshirts and their castor oil. Socialist eloquence was defeated and eliminated from our public life because at the decisive moment it was not backed up with force. The Socialists had many eloquent charlatans, many Don Circostanzas and Don Zabagliones, but no fighters armed with daggers and bombs. Our Socialism, particularly our Parliamentary Socialism, consisted predominantly of unarmed rhetoric enlisted in the service of a humanitarian mythology. Our Socialists were a mob of poverty-stricken workers and *cafoni* organized by innumerable lawyers, barbers, and commercial travellers; three types who are unquestionably eloquent, but cowardly. Could our Socialist movement have come to any other end? It could not.

Our country is a country of rhetoric, but of armed rhetoric. The conditions in which the workers and peasants have lived their lives have always been so appalling that in self-defence the country's whole political and social superstructure has always had to resort

to a great deal of ranting about Culture, Patriotism, Religion, and Order. Situations arise, however, when words no longer suffice, and then it becomes necessary to use force to save culture and all those other fine things.

It is well known that Etcetera Etcetera has assigned to the intellectuals of the Government party the motto of "Book and Rifle," which is to be seen reproduced in the form of a vignette on many Italian Youth publications at the present time. A rifle is shown resting on a book. In reality it is the book that rests on the rifle. Nevertheless, Italian literature is in a state of acute depression in spite of the rifle's support.

The depression is of a kind different from that afflicting other countries; it has a specifically Italian stamp. Italians read fewer and fewer books, and when they do read they avoid the books supported by rifles and pick out translations of foreign books. They turn for choice to pre-revolutionary Russian books. In 1927 the Minister of the Interior notified booksellers and publishers that in future it would be an offence to display pre-revolutionary Russian books in the window, and ordered them to sell them at a much higher price than Italian novels. Thus since 1927 Italian novels have been supported not only by rifles but by a considerable price advantage. Even this, however, has availed them nothing. On the contrary, since then the situation has actually deteriorated.

Every two or three years the awkward problem of why Italians do not read the authors of their own country but prefer foreign authors is discussed at length in the Italian literary Press. It has actually become a classic subject for debate, and a whole literature has sprung up about it. Giuseppe Prezzolini, now a Fascist propagandist in North America, states in his book *La Cultura Italiana*:

"Bonghi raised the question of why literature is not popular in Italy. The answer is easy; it is that Italian literature does not come from the people but has always been an upper-class product. Italian literature has been a literature of nobles, courtiers, priests, monks, and in our century professors. It was originally developed at the Sicilian Court, and it is still an apanage of the Middle School or of the Academy.

"The literary dilettante who has nothing to say but has to imagine feelings that he does not experience is a feature of every century. . . . The doctrine of 'pure art' that ran its course in the time of futurism, or the 'pure literature' advocated with a certain dignity by *La Ronda*, which left behind it the memory of its name if of nothing else, exemplified the same flaw in the national character. Many Italians of the nineteenth century, particularly

De Sanctis, dedicated themselves to the task of destroying this type of literature, root and branch; one of the last efforts in this direction was that made by *La Voce* and allied journals. But all these efforts were quixotic, because it would be necessary to make a desert of Italy to make sure of exterminating the weed, so luxuriantly does it flourish in every nook and cranny of the country." (*La Cultura Italiana*, pages 21-22.)

Bonghi lived at the end of the nineteenth century. Thus, as I have already mentioned, the evil is not one of recent growth; there is no question of its having been introduced by the dictatorship. The dictatorship was not responsible for the disease of rhetoric; on the contrary, it was one of its results. It is true that quixotic attempts have been made to liberate the cultural life of Italy from the sway of the rhetoricians, but all of them failed, as Prezzolini said. The literary history of modern Italy is nothing but the history of these abortive attempts.

During the years in which the generation to which I belong was being brought face to face with life the shining star in the heaven of our national rhetoric was D'Annunzio. This is what Croce says of him:

"He had borrowed first from Carducci and the realists, then from the pre-Raphaelites, then from the Russian mystics, then from Nietzsche; and later a belligerent Garibaldian influence made itself felt; but whatever he touched he transformed, to make of it an object of sensuous delectation, for the pleasure of eye, ear, touch, smell, of all the senses; and his ideal, if he had an ideal that was his very own, seems to have been a totally new sense, different from any already possessed by the human animal." (Croce, *Storia d'Italia*, page 165.)

The contagion was in the air. Another typical example is provided by Pascoli, who, though his poetical inspiration seemed of a very different order from D'Annunzio's, was also a victim of the disease of rhetoric.

"As a disciple of Carducci and a painter of idyllic, rustic scenes in a style derived from old popular poetry," Croce writes, "his aim was to elevate himself to the status of an heroic, mystical bard, and dissolve his dryness and calm into a fluid impressionism, in which humanism and patriotism and mysticism remained his aims, while over all of them there reigned a tearful, sighing voluptuousness that did not take long to turn into a mannerism." (Croce, *ibid.*, page 166.)

Contemporary with Pascoli great public buildings were being put up in Italy entirely for show, and Government *palazzi*, lyric theatres,

and expensive, ugly, and cumbersome monuments were erected in places where even the most elementary hygienic facilities were lacking.

There were men who reacted against this method of hiding the meanness and hardness of real life behind a façade of marble and sonorous verse, but their revolt was always ineffective, because they lacked comprehension of the social forces underlying all the rhetoric. They were certainly able to criticize its effects, but not its causes. In reaction against D'Annunzio, Soffici, Boine, Jahier, Slataper proclaimed the necessity of an art that should be serious and moral, addressed to the inner conscience. The group of writers associated with *La Voce* of Florence, Papini, Prezzolini, Amendola, reacted against the influence of D'Annunzio by demanding a literature of ideas. The *crepuscolari*, Gaeta, Gozzano, Corazzini, Palazzeschi, wanted to escape from the aesthetic of false magnificence by returning to that of the provinces in the nineteenth century. It may be said that no literary paper was founded by Italian young men without raising the flag of revolt against D'Annunzianism and all its affinities and derivatives. Anti-D'Annunzianism was only victorious, however, controversially and intellectually; so far as artistic creation was concerned its results were inferior to its premises; they were not entirely immune from the contagion of rhetoric themselves. *La Ronda* petered out into sensuous, descriptive, autobiographical fragmentarism, in which calligraphic preciousness was called in to hide the interior void. *La Voce* passed from the control of Prezzolini to that of De Robertis, lost Salvemini, Amendola, and others who went over to politics, and also tailed off into refined aestheticism.

In 1920, after all these failures, the critic Russo proposed making a fresh start by proclaiming the necessity of a return to Verga. Borgese announced his "return to classic, humanistic construction, to inquiry into the problems of the soul, to an essential style stripped of all ornament." The drive in this new direction had matured during the war. Its greatest fruit was Borgese's novel *Rubè*, which was a merciless self-criticism and a condemnation of the moral insufficiency of the Italian petty bourgeoisie. Apart from *Rubè* there were the isolated, marginal comments of Tozzi, Linati, Stuparich, Svevo, Betti, and others, in each of whom in turn the critics discovered native echoes of great foreign writers, or anticipation and promise of an originality that failed to materialize. The exigencies of the novel remained unfulfilled. An attempt was even made to rationalize this impotence and present it as a characteristic of the Italian mind. Papini wrote:

"Being, as he generally is, a subjectivist, the Italian of genius



LES JOCKEYS
Drawing by VERTÈS
From the exhibition "The Circus" at the Leger Galleries

can do many things; he can express his own feelings, dreams, desires (lyric poetry); try to convince others, to his own advantage or that of his ideas (eloquence); artistically present his ideas on man, society, or other general themes (theoretical works); describe great deeds of the past, looking to political causes and external events rather than to the inner mind of the protagonists (history); or, finally, attack these in order to ridicule them, criticize them, or defend himself (satire and controversy). But he cannot create creatures of the imagination who talk and act as living beings; or can only do so badly. In short, he is no novelist or dramatist." (Papini, *Pegaso*, No. i.)

But that is an arbitrary statement, confuted by the history of Italian literature itself, which can boast of great story-tellers such as Boccaccio, Manzoni, and Verga. A far more profound study of the relations between race and narrative genius would be required before it would be possible to accept it. On one point, however, there is general agreement, namely that real novels are lacking in modern Italian literature, which is devoid of real, creative, profound, original, living works, showing great cross-sections of society. And the gap has not been filled by Moravia, who, after the quixotic and abortive efforts described above, has made one more. His purpose has been described as that of pure narration. The pure narration of the author of *Le Ambizioni Sbagliate* is a last echo of the aesthetic of pure intuition. Moravia constructs a world of his own, the sole coherence of which is that of narrative, in contrast to the effective and human truth, hence also the moral and historical truth of the great *impure* story-tellers. With Moravia art dissolves once more into technique and aestheticism; it may rouse the admiration of his colleagues, but not that of his compatriots, who continue to prefer Gogol and Tolstóy. Moravia has penetrated to the very last frontier permitted to an Italian author; the frontier between rhetoric and living art. In our country that frontier coincides with that placed by the State between legality and illegality, between that which is permitted and favoured and that which is banned and persecuted. That frontier looks even more prodigious and insurmountable if one remembers what Bonghi and Prezzolini have said of the social position of Italian literary men; the frontier, that is to say, is a class frontier. It is impossible to paint a true picture of any society without judging it. For an Italian writer that means going to prison or into exile. It means something else; breaking the courtly, cap-and-motley tradition of Italian literature; changing class.

I FELL FOR A SAILOR

By Fred Urquhart

THE fleet was in. Mamie said, "C'mon. Let's go grab ourselves a sailor." I didn't want to go. I said I wasn't feeling so good; I'd stay home and wash my undies. It was Friday night, the night I always went out with Al.

"C'mon," Mamie said. "There ain't no sense moping about that dill-pickle. I bet he'd hand himself a big laugh if he knew you was sittin' around like this. Get a sailor, and show the big stiff you don't give two hoots for him."

"O.K." I said.

I didn't want to go, but Mamie was right, I guessed. I figured I'd show Al I wasn't as sore as he thought I was. The big bum, to think he'd try and make a sucker out of me!

I put on my yellow frock with the little brown flecks on it. I looked pretty good. Mamie gave me a loan of her brown belt with the brilliant buckle, and I lent her my red scarf. "No bags, Sally," she said. "We might lose 'em."

"O.K." I said.

Mamie knew best. She'd been there lots of times, although I'd never done this before. I was scared. I held on to Mamie's arm like I was afraid I'd lose her when we got down to the waterfront. We could see the battleships lying away out like big grey pipes in the water. Some little boats were coming away from them. The pier was crowded with girls. Mamie knew a lot of them, but I didn't know any. There was one or two boys there too, but none of us girls looked at *them*. We watched the first little boat coming in. It was full of sailors, and they waved and shouted, and all the girls waved and shouted back as the boat rushed through the sea towards the pier. I didn't wave. I was too scared.

"Here, kid, quit tremblin'," Mamie said. "You'd think you were gonna be hung or somethin'. And for gawd's sake smile! Smile!"

I smiled.

Some of the sailors didn't wait till the boat came right into the landing-stage. They jumped. One of them fell into the water, but I didn't see what happened to him. Mamie grabbed me and dragged me as near the landing-stage as we could get. All the girls were clawing each other to see who could get nearest. Every minute I expected some of them to fall in like the sailor had done. Mamie knew lots of the sailors, and she kept yelling *Hello, Bill!* or *Hello,*

Joe! or *Hello, Gus!* to them, and if she couldn't remember their names, or if she hadn't seen them before, she cried, *Hello, brother!*

A lot of them said, "Hello, sweetie!" and asked if we were waiting on anybody special. But Mamie didn't give them any encouragement. "On your way, boys, on your way!" she said. I didn't say anything; I kept on smiling like Mamie had told me.

Mamie was looking for something real good. She had her eye on a tall, dark sailor at the back of the boat, who was about the last to come ashore. He was lovely. Mamie got so near the edge of the pier when he was coming down the plank that I held on to her, afraid she'd fall in.

"Hello, brother!" she said.

But he brushed past us and grinned at a young fellow with a pink tie. Mamie scowled after them when they walked away together. "What a false alarm he turned out to be!" she said. "Lookit all the chances we missed! We should of grabbed them when we got them."

"But there are other boats comin' in," I said.

"All the best ones come first," Mamie said.

But she brightened up when the next boatload was spilled, for one of the first to jump ashore was Chotsie Moon, a boy she'd run around with before. He was all over her. She was pretty pleased too, but she tried not to show it. "Just my bad luck to meet you," she said.

"Bad luck nothin', sister!" Chotsie said. "You must of known I was comin'. Here, meet my pal, Clem."

Clem was tall and fair. He was awful good-looking. I liked him. I guess he must of liked me too, for he walked along with me and let Mamie and Chotsie go ahead. We didn't say much. I didn't know what to say. When I walked out with Al he always did all the talking. I never knew what to say to a boy, unless it was: Have you seen this picture? or that? and what did you think of it? But I guessed Clem wouldn't of seen no pictures lately on a battleship. I wondered if I could try something about the Presidential election, but I didn't know enough about it to try to hand it to him.

"What's your name?" he said. "I didn't catch it."

"Sally," I said. "What's yours? Your last name, I mean."

"Clem Smith," he said.

I laughed.

"Honest," he said.

"I bet you tell all the girls that," I said.

"Well, it's my real name," he said. "I'm from Brooklyn. Here's my address. 1129 East Third Street."

"I been in Brooklyn once," I said. "When I was a kid."

"You liked it?" he said.

"It was swell," I said.

"I'll show you around some day," he said.

We got on pretty good after that, laughing and kidding each other. He was a nice guy. When he took off his little white sailor's hat I saw that his fair hair was curly; it was all bunched on top of his head and some of the curls dangled over his brow. His skin was brown and smooth. He looked clean. I'd of liked to stroke the nape of his neck where the hair was closely cropped and the little gold hairs glinted on top of his brown skin. Gee, he was swell. A whole lot better-looking than Al.

Mamie and Chotsie had stopped outside an eating-house. "Let's go in here," Chotsie said, when Clem and me came up.

We went in, and Chotsie ordered ham and eggs and beer. I didn't want any ham and eggs; I wasn't hungry. So Clem and Chotsie shared my plateful between them. I'd never drunk beer before, but I didn't want them to think me queer by refusing it, especially when Mamie drunk it like water. But I didn't take another glass when Clem offered me it; I guessed I'd had enough. But Mamie didn't refuse another or another, and she was pretty well lit when her and Chotsie left to go to the ten cents-a-dance hall where Mamie worked.

"I'm gonna book you up for the whole night, baby," Chotsie said.

"Well, I sure hope you gotta lotta dough," Mamie said.

"Ain't you comin', Sally?" Chotsie said.

"No, she don't work there," Mamie said. "She works in a cigar store. This is her night off."

After Chotsie and Mamie had left, me and Clem went for a walk along the waterfront. There were lots of couples out. Lots of sailors with their arms around girls the way Clem had his arm around me, but I didn't see anybody I liked better than Clem. I dunno how his arm got around my waist. It just sort of got there.

"See that moon," Clem said.

"It's pretty," I said.

"Not as pretty as you," Clem said.

He squeezed my waist. "Makes me feel romantic," he said.

"Me too," I said.

We sat on a seat and faced the sea. We didn't say much. We sat as close as close and held our arms around each other. I had my head on his shoulder. I was thinking that Al had never made me feel like this. Al wasn't romantic. He said a lot more than Clem

did, but it wasn't the things that Clem said that mattered; it was the way he said them. We looked at the water, and as it got darker the streaks the moon made on it got brighter and brighter till you would of thought the sea was a piece of dark blue velvet with gold stripes. I felt like I was in church or something. I felt sort of sad and lonely, but not lonely either, because Clem's arm was tight around my waist. Maybe it was the beer that made me feel like that. Maybe it was the moon. I dunno.

Anyway, it was beautiful. Clem's fingers kept stroking me and stroking me. I could of sat there for ever, not talking, just watching the sea get darker and darker. But it began to get cold, and we had to move. "Gee, baby," Clem said as we walked on, "I'm for you in a big way."

"Me too," I said.

"I just hate to have to leave you," he said.

"Me too," I said.

"Will you keep my picture?" he said.

We stopped, and he took out his card-case and opened it. When he was looking for his picture he pulled out one of a girl with dark hair and a rose behind her ear. "My sister," he said, when he saw me looking at it.

"She ain't like you," I said.

"No. She takes after the old man. I'm like Mom," he said.

The picture of him was swell. You would of thought he was sitting there himself; his curls were peeping out under his hat the way they were peeping out now. "It's lovely," I said, and I put it inside the neck of my dress because I didn't have a bag with me. Clem poked his finger into the top of my dress and pushed the photo further down. "See and not lose it," he said.

"I guess I ain't got one to give you," I said. "They're all at home."

"That's tough," he said. "I sure would of liked one."

He looked so disappointed I could of cried. "I'll send you one," I said.

"It'll be a while before we make port and I get any letters," he said. "Couldn't you take me home and give me it? I won't stay."

"I'll risk it," I said. "But Mrs. Bauermeister where Mamie and me room is awful strict."

"I won't stay but two three minutes," he said. "Honest I won't."

We got on a street-car. Clem kept his arm around me all the way. Al would never of done that. Al was awful proper in public. You'd never of thought he could of made the suggestions he made that we had the row about. But Clem was different. Clem didn't

care a hoot for what people in that car thought. Neither did I. I felt real proud at the way people looked at us. I guess most of the girls were jealous. Clem was the best-looker on that car, and then some.

We crept up the stairs so Mrs. Bauermeister wouldn't hear us. When we got in I said "Sit down," and I took a pile of Mamie's clothes off a chair and dumped them on the floor so's he could get a seat. He sat with his hat in his hand, dangling it between his knees as he looked about him.

"Nice room," he said.

I went to the dressing-table and began to rummage in the top drawer, looking for the photograph. I could see Clem in the mirror. He saw me looking at him, and he grinned.

"Nice baby," he said.

He made me feel so queer looking at me like that I couldn't find the photo. I turned everything over and over. Clem rose and came up behind me. He didn't say anything. He stood close against me and put his arms around me. Then he pulled me back so I leaned against him with my head on his chest. He sunk his chin into my hair, and we looked at each other in the mirror. "Gee, honey," he said softly, "I'm for you in a big way."

"Me too," I said.

I felt all weak, and my inside was watery. I knew then I'd let him do anything: I just couldn't help myself. I was for him strong.

It was funny I wouldn't let Al do it. But I guess Al was too business-like. Clem didn't say nothing. He just took everything for granted. He didn't speak the way Al done, taking away all the romance. Clem was nothing if not romantic.

I promised to write to Clem, and he promised to write to me. "You're my girl now, honey," he said.

I felt real sad after Clem had gone, especially when I discovered he'd forgotten to take my picture with him. And the next day, when I was watching the fleet steam away out into the grey sea, disappearing into a mist until there was nothing of them left, I could have cried; I was so miserable. But thinking about all the good times Clem and me would have when the fleet came in again cheered me up, and I went back to the cigar store. The boss said somebody had rung me up, and that he was gonna ring again.

It was Al, wondering if I'd meet him next Friday as usual.

"No," I said.

"I'm sorry, Sally," he said, and I could tell by the way his voice sounded that he looked as if he was gonna cry.

"I ain't," I said.

"Are you still sore at me, Sally?" he said.

"No," I said. "But I got another fellow now."

And honest, I wasn't sore at Al any more. I guess it was lucky we quarrelled, because if we hadn't I'd never of gone to the waterfront with Mamie, and then I wouldn't of met Clem. It just shows, I thought, that things you think are gonna kill you are often the things that help you to be happier than you'd ever dreamed.

"Sally, you ain't," Al said.

"Yes, I have," I said, and I said, "On your way, brother, on your way!" like Mamie told the sailors.

And I hung up and began to think of Clem, and the more I remembered of him the more I loved him. I'd fallen for him harder than I ever dreamed I'd fall for a fellow. Harder than I ever fell for Al. And as the weeks passed I fell harder and harder, and gee, how I wished the fleet would come in again!

I wrote to the address Clem gave me in Brooklyn, but I got the letter back with "Not Known" on it. I must of been in such a dither that night I didn't take the address down right. I felt real mad at myself. I hoped Clem wouldn't think when he got no letter that I'd forgotten him. If he'd even had my photo to console him, it wouldn't of been so bad. I got so low thinking about it Mamie said why not write care of the fleet. So I wrote, but I got no answer to that letter either.

Maybe he's ill, I thought, and not able to write. I got real worried thinking about him, and I'll say I had plenty of other worries on my mind at the time. So I wrote again.

But I never got any answers to any of my letters, and the next time the fleet came in Clem wasn't with it. Or if he was he didn't come ashore, for I waited at the quay till every boatload was spilled.

I couldn't even ask Chotsie if he knew anything about him, for Chotsie's time was up. Maybe Clem's time is up too. Maybe he's lost my address. I wish I knew. I sure would like to see him again. But I guess I never will. All I got to remember him was the photograph and a scare.

SUNT LACRIMAE RERUM

By Martin Cooper

“... mentem et mortalia tangunt.” Poetry lives in the world of the human heart, but less often on the sun- than on the shadow-side, the *Schattenseite*, of that world. The greatest poets have known all the weathers of existence, and known them so thoroughly that they have sometimes added, as it were, a new month to the calendar of the heart. But it has always been a winter month. It was a new order of misery that Goethe created in *Werther*, and by a glamour of despair and *ennui* Byron caught the hearts of a generation deceived in their hopes of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. It is hard to find a great secular poet inaugurating any deep or lasting renewal of a positive faith and the joyful acceptance of life: for though poets see further than other men, they are more sensitive to the real wastes and squalors of life and so often lack the heart to press on to the joys and beauties which the very greatest of their own number have sworn lie beyond. There have been *Candides* among the poets, who have preached that “all was for the best in the best of all possible worlds”: but Browning is not remembered for the optimism of his physical vitality, and “God’s in his heaven, All’s right with the world” is a poor weapon with which to fight the evils, miseries, and injustices of a world with which all is emphatically not right. The only great poetry of hope has been the poetry of religion: and it is a hope which has often lasted and been found convincing in spite of the cutting away of the logical or intellectual ground from beneath it. So that even if Christianity, as we know it, should go the way of the Olympian religion of fifth-century Athens, the ring of the last sonnets of Michelangelo—the cry “Vorrei voler, Signor, quel ch’io non voglio”—would still be as true as that of the great religious choruses of Aeschylus and Sophocles. But men gifted with deep religious feeling are the exceptions, among the poets as among any other class of men. The great majority, in their vision of human life, have been less moved by the heroic hopes and achievements of the very few than by the shortness, pathos, and frustration which make up the large shadow side of even the happiest and most successful lives, and seem to be almost synonymous with existence for the greater part of the world. Life is “a tale told by an idiot,” “inutile miseria”: or, at best, “a dome of many-coloured glass.” And so the study of poetry often reduces itself to a kind of anatomy of melancholy, an analysis of varying kinds of pessimism.

Through this pessimism there runs an active and a passive principle. For, unequivocally faced with the misery of the world, the poet may weep or he may blaspheme, but accept he must: only the blind and the fools refuse that.

At the opening of the last century a new wave of sensibility was sweeping Europe, a wave that had reached tidal strength in the first great social revolution and had subsided, leaving in its trail a shattered world, strewn with wreckage. The old faiths were moribund, unable to grow or to adapt themselves to a new extension of the human spirit; and the religion of Man had suffered its first crushing blow in the conversion of a great humanitarian ideal into a military empire. The Napoleon to whom Beethoven had dedicated his *Eroica* symphony had turned from a liberator to a tyrant, and men were left faithless, disillusioned of the old and the new alike. The first attempt to create Utopia and to give body to the dream of a golden age had failed, and the hope of another world beyond the grave had grown faint: the Stoics stood and cursed, the world looked for distraction, and Alfred de Musset—too weak to stand, his head in his hands, cried

J'ai perdu ma force et ma vie,
Mes amis et ma gaîté

and saw in tears—in sensibility and compassion—the high-water mark of his life. This flight to the subjective continued to the end of the century and beyond, giving rise to exquisite poetry and spreading itself over the whole poet's world, until the very seasons wrack his heart-strings and Verlaine can find in the ending of summer only an echo of his own bruised despair—

Les sanglots longs
Des violons
De l'automne
Blessent mon cœur
D'une langueur
Monotone.

But with the turn of the century, as conventional religious faith steadily declined, the Stoicism with which a few had faced the disasters of the opening of the century spread. Already Emily Brontë had written in *The Old Stoic*:

And if I pray, the only prayer
That moves my lips for me
Is "leave the heart that now I bear
And give me liberty."

Yes, as my swift days near their goal,
 'Tis all that I implore,
 In life and death a chainless soul
 With courage to endure.

Nowadays, it is true, Stoicism is as out of fashion as any other form of pessimism, for sensibility tends to turn outward from the poet's private griefs and to centre on the more remediable of mankind's woes—on the injustice and oppression which lie not in human nature itself but in a perversion of that nature. Yet even now there is an occasional cry of

"Nothing we can do
 Can sweeten the real rue
 That we begin and end with groans."
 (Day Lewis, *From Feathers to Iron*.)

For the poets are not less sensitive and the inexorable—the "real rue"—is not less real or inexorable if a man refuses to make it the main theme of his poetry. It is interesting to find Mr. Day Lewis writing with such enthusiasm of the last of the Stoics: "In this class"—he is speaking of the "true lyric poets"—"I doubt if one could include, of English poets, more than Shakespeare, a few of the Elizabethans, Herrick, Blake, Tennyson perhaps, and Housman." (*A Hope for Poetry*, 1934, p. 66.) A. E. Housman stood in the direct line of the great pessimists—Leopardi, de Vigny, Emily Brontë—and by comparing and contrasting his poetry with that of Leopardi, whom he resembles in many, and more than superficial, ways, it may be possible to appreciate both the value and the weakness of pessimism as an attitude to life and as an inspiration to the poet.

* * * * *

Leopardi shows pessimism at its greatest, Housman at its weakest. Both were Classical scholars by profession, and minute and accurate scholars, with no use for literary generalizations. Both were in many ways cut off from the ordinary life of the world—Leopardi by his physical deformity (he was hunchbacked) and Housman by some less patent but no less torturing psychological twist which filled him with a hatred for women and arrested his emotional concentration on a youthful ideal of passionate and romantic friendship which excluded sexual love in its ordinary manifestations. Leopardi, though a passionate admirer of women, joins Housman in his obsession with youth and an almost physical horror of old age. "La vecchiezza è male sommo" ("Old age is the worst of evils"), he writes. Both, then, suffered from violent maladjustments to the society in which they lived: but it is in their different reactions that

their individualities are manifested. Leopardi was faced, in addition to his deformity, with miserable health, early failing eyesight, a galling financial dependence on a father he feared and hated, and an indomitably sensitive heart, which not even the regular indifference, and often mockery, of the women he adored could cool into philosophical calm. Housman, on the other hand, was gifted with at least ordinary physical health and attractiveness, a comfortable, secure, and respected position, and a proud, early-bitter heart, proof against love. Of the two Leopardi might, in all reason, be expected to show the blacker bitterness and the more savage endurance: and nothing but a fundamentally greater and more generous character can explain Leopardi's complete inability to accept disillusionment—whatever he might occasionally write—his undimmed emotional incandescence, and the essential generousness of heart which refused the bitter balms offered by his intellect. In 1833 he wrote:

Amaro e noia la vita, altro mai nulla:
 E fango è il mondo.
 T'acqueta omai. Dispera
 L'ultima volta. Al gener nostro il fato
 Non donò che il morire. Omai disprezza
 Te, la natura, il brutto
 Poter che, nascoso, a commun danno impera,
 E l'infinita vanità del tutto.

(*A se stesso.*)

(Life is bitter and tedious, nothing more:
 And the world is mud.
 Calm thyself henceforth. Despair
 Once and for all. Fate's only gift
 To our kind is death. Henceforth despise
 Thyself, Nature, the hideous
 Power which, hidden, impels all to a common ruin,
 And the infinite vanity of all beneath the sun.)

But two years later he is still refusing to accept the "infinita vanità del tutto," and sweetly and naïvely puzzled, like a hurt child, by the extreme contradictions of human nature—the "mistero eterno del esser nostro," he writes:

Oggi d'eccelsi, immensi
 Pensieri e sensi inenarrabil fonte,
 Beltà grandeggia, e pare,
 Quale splendor vibrato
 Da natura immortal su queste arene,
 Di sovrumani fati,
 Di fortunati regni e d'aurei mondi

Segno e sicura spene
 Dare al mortale stato :
 Diman, per lieve forza,
 Sozzo a vedere, abominoso, abbietto,
 Divien quel che fu dianzi
 Quasi angelico aspetto.

(*Sopra il ritratto di una bella donna.*)

Even as early as 1822 he had asked, more puzzled than bitter :

Qual fallo mai, qual sì nefando eccesso
 Macchiommi anzi il natale, onde sì torvo
 Il ciel mi fosse e di fortuna il volto?

(What fault of mine, what excess so nefarious
 Branded me even before my birth, why were heaven
 And fortune's face so cruel to me?)

(*Ultimo canto di Saffo.*)

This mood is almost unknown to Housman. Only once does he speak simply and undefiantly of his own unhappiness, crying :

I, a stranger and afraid
 In a world I never made.

His characteristic reaction is one of bitterness and a defiance which occasionally borders on that of the petulant child. He writes :

Whatever brute and blackguard made the world
 and in the same poem—

It is in truth iniquity on high
 To cheat our sentenced souls of aught they crave

and in No. XII of the same volume :

The laws of God, the laws of man
 He may keep that will and can.

Here there is no tenderness, and the only magnificence is in an impersonal reflection such as

The troubles of our proud and angry dust
 Are from eternity and shall not fail.

There are none of the mystical, almost luminous lines which star the blackness of Leopardi's night—the

La vita della morte è più gentile

(The life of Death is sweeter)

(*Pensiero dominante.*)

or, of the human soul

Ardito notator per l'oceano

(Bold swimmer in the ocean)

(*Sopra il ritratto di una bella donna.*)

E il naufragar m'è dolce in questo mare

(And in this sea shipwreck is sweet)

(*L'Infinito.*)

Leopardi reached an almost mystical passion for Death, the brother of Love, and these two ultimate beauties he saw as one

Cose quaggiù sì belle

Altre il mondo non ha, non han le stelle.

(Such lovely things

This world below, the very stars cannot match.)

(*Amore e Morte.*)

This passion we find in Housman too, though, typically enough, in a bitterer and savager form, stripped of idealism.

When shall I be dead and rid

Of the wrong my father did?

How long, how long till spade and hearse

Put to sleep my mother's curse?

Leopardi could never rid himself of the feeling that Nature was an unnatural mother, in whom cruelty was deliberate and vicious. He speaks of

Ancient omnipotent nature

Which fashioned me for misery

and finds fault with her for her callous indifference: even if pity was too much to ask, some show of interest in her children was the least they might expect—

pietosa no, ma spettatrice almeno.

(not pitying, but at least watching.)

(*Alla Primavera.*)

Housman, living in a later and more sophisticated age, when the bloom was off romanticism, shows none of this feeling. Nature to him is a perpetual source of aesthetic inspiration and a beautiful *décor* for the ugly and unintelligible ballet of life. His heart is shut to further promptings and speculations; he will indulge in no pathetic fallacies.

What then is the final attitude of these two poets of despair towards life? What is their *Weltanschauung*? The answer is that they

have none, for neither theorized beyond his own unhappiness. Leopardi is the franker, the more human, the sweeter—and incomparably the greater. There is not one of his complaints, not one of his baffled hopes and questions that has not found an echo at least once in the lifetime of every sensitive man. His themes are eternal—the beauty of youth, the pathos of rejected love and old age, the stab of a remembered passion of youth, the contrast between the angel and the tiger in every man, the heartlessness of nature, the finality of Love and Death, the inalienable value of human feeling. For that

The earth that wakes one human heart to feeling
Can centre both the worlds of heaven and hell

—that Leopardi believed as sincerely as Emily Brontë. Unashamed, he admits that the rehearsal of his own unhappy memories brings a kind of pleasure :

And yet memory
Delights me, and the telling of the tale
Of my grief.

It was completely foreign to his nature to withhold or dissemble, and though the prose works contain some passages of complete cynicism, the poems—Leopardi's heart rather than his head—are frankly inconsistent with them. "There are two truths which most men will never believe"—he writes—"one, that they know nothing, and the other, that they are nothing. And there is a third, which proceeds from the second—that there is nothing to hope for after death." And yet the same man could write the *Sabato del villaggio*, *Silvia*, *La quiete dopo la tempesta*. It is the universality of his feeling, its warmth, and its passionate questioning which refused the easy answer of cynicism, the impregnable faith—despite all individual moments of despair—in the *visioni altiere*, the lofty visions of the human heart, which make Leopardi one of the great poets of the world.

Housman's defect was a defect of character. He allowed his own private maladjustments and miseries to warp his whole view of humanity: and with no conception of love, no feeling in his heart comparable with that which lights every line of Leopardi's poetry, Housman became cynical, sardonic, proud. His poetry is the poetry of a sensitive, twisted man, whose twist has perverted his view of the world. Repressed passion has turned sour, shut off from all possibility of expression by a pride which is the essence of smallness. Leopardi—frank, impetuous, and emotional even in his complaining and in his *petits côtés*—had the great man's disregard of ridicule: Housman was even in his poetry concerned with that *n'être pas dupe*

which is the small man's protection against the gales and storms of human feeling and aspiration. His lyric gift, like that of Heine, was as narrow as it was perfect. Emotionally he was a proud, sour, small-hearted adolescent, and before the open-hearted abandon, the passionate scepticism and passionate idealism of Leopardi the tight-lipped Northern don fades into a petulant obscurity. The pessimism of Leopardi and Emily Brontë is a spur to new effort, a sharp sword thrusting them on to creation, a black storm whirling them far above the earth. Housman and Heine smile bitterly at them, cultivate their beautiful small gardens, and turn for consolation, the one to his choice vintage, the other to his mistress.



FIREWOOD IN GEORGIA

Wood engraving by CLARE LEIGHTON in the 17th Annual Exhibition of the Society of Wood-Engravers at the Redfern Galleries

MISUNDERSTANDING IN THE LADY-CHAPEL

A DRAMA

By Margaret Masterman

(With apologies to the author of "Murder in the Cathedral")

Enter an Aged GARDENER.

GARDENER:

Digging and half digging,
Digging and half digging,
We see, we hear, we smell,
All should be well,
But somehow life is hell,
Digging and half digging.

GARDENER'S WIFE:

Sinning and half sinning
Would be enough, if what we thought was true,
But what we know we know
Is what you knew we knew you knew we knew,
And that is not.
Ah, blot
That what is not
Should be such rot.
We see that what we see we see we see. . . .

GARDENER:

Silence, you wanton.
Digging and half digging—

GARDENER'S WIFE:

The earth's not earth, the sky is not the sky,
We feel a yearning, and we wonder why.

GARDENER:

Digging and half digging.

GARDENER'S WIFE:

Why don't you do some digging?

GARDENER:

Because I am half digging,
Half physical, half spiritual, and half digging.



QUEEN VICTORIA, PRINCE ALBERT AND THE
PRINCESS ROYAL

Watercolour drawing by F. X. WINTERHALTER (1805-1873)

*In the possession of the Rt. Hon. The Earl of Harewood, K.G. Exhibited
at Messrs. Knoedler's, in the Winterhalter Exhibition in aid of the War
Service Legion*

GARDENER'S WIFE:

Pshaw, I'm going away.

She goes away.

Enter the BEAUTY CHORUS.

BEAUTY CHORUS:

We are the aged crones of Canterbury.

They dance.

We live on the surface only,
But though we do it, and though we hope to do it,
We know that it's not the right thing, not the right thing at all.
You'd be surprised, the things that have happened in Canterbury.

FIRST SOLO:

There was the time, when the Pope sent Pontefract
Six pages of accounts, and three large bulls.

SECOND SOLO:

There was the time when Pontefract sent the Pope
A premonition of a reformation.

FIRST SOLO:

There was the time when no one took Jerusalem.

SECOND SOLO:

There was the time when everyone had dreams.

All shudder.

Unpleasant dreams, self-contradictory dreams,
And God, poor God, had to make them all come true
To please the Pope and humour Pontefract.

CHORUS:

Amazing things have happened at Canterbury,
But you'd be horrified,
Horrified,
Horrified,
If you knew the things that are going to happen at Canterbury.
The dance finishes.

LEADER OF THE CHORUS:

Behold the messenger come here from France.

Enter a MESSENGER.

MESSENGER:

Whence do you think I come?

CHORUS:

You come from France.

GARDENER:

We see it by the colour of your eyes,
Your martial bearing and your new-cleaned boots.
We know by instinct that you come from France.

310 MISUNDERSTANDING IN THE LADY-CHAPEL

LEADER OF THE CHORUS:

Besides, all messengers come here from France.

MESSENGER:

All hail, you aged crones of Canterbury,
Half animal, half mineral, half witted,

Digging or half digging,
Witted and half witted.

I've just come here to have a little chat
About the doom that waits for Pontefract.
You know that when the Pope's Emissary
Had tollage ta'en—

GARDENER:

With a sudden gleam of intelligence.

The same that caused the king
To pose the problem of the Church and State,—

LEADER OF THE CHORUS:

The same that was to prove the ultimate cause
Of the decision of the Lambeth Conference
In 1929,—

MESSENGER:

The very same.

This tollage then, with the right of Sanctuary,
And the disposition of redeemable tithe,
The ancient right of snuffling convocation,
The right to choose what rural deans he pleased,
The right of way, the right to make a fuss,
The Sarum Rite, and many other rights,
Did Pontefract assert against the King,
Which was untoward, as a few years ago
He had asserted them against the Pope,
And this begat disunion.

GARDENER:

Yes, we know

The ullage and the convocation was
The final rub.

MESSENGER:

The fact is known to all.

Well, since these things have given him an itch,
The king, or Pope, I don't remember which,
Has sent some gunmen, (that's the brutal fact)
To come down here and murder Pontefract.

CHORUS:

Oh! Oh!

Enter PONTEFRACT, a saintly and cultivated cleric with an American accent.

PONTEFRACT:

I have come here to die.

CHORUS:

But why? Oh why?

PONTEFRACT:

I cannot tell you why. At least, not yet.

CHORUS:

But don't forget. Ah, no, please don't forget.

PONTEFRACT:

Quietly and impressively.

I am now standing in the Lady-Chapel.
The only entrance is that open door.
I shall be murdered just inside that door.
If I should go across and shut the door,
Or put a barrel to block up the door,
Or seal the door, or hide, or bolt the door,
Or get out of the sight-line of the door,
I should not die. But you'll find I will die.

CHORUS:

Firmly.

You cannot die before you have been tried.
That's been essential when a martyr's died.
And see, here comes the Tempter.

GARDENER:

Yes, he's here.

Enter the TEMPTER. He bears a label on himself with the words:
"FIRST TEMPTER. REFUSE ALL SUBSTITUTES."

TEMPTER:

Why don't you make a bolt from Canterbury?

PONTEFRACT:

Wearily.

Away, temptation.

CHORUS:

See, he runs away.

The TEMPTER changes his label for one with:

"SECOND TEMPTER. ABSOLUTELY THE ONLY RELIABLE
BRAND IN THE BURNING."

TEMPTER:

Life is an interesting experience
Which you should not curtail.

PONTEFRACT:

Pleasantly.

I rather think
I've heard that one before.

CHORUS:

He runs again.

The TEMPTER puts on his third label:

"THIRD TEMPTER, MINE'S A MINOR,"
while the leader of the Chorus writes on a convenient scoreboard:
"NO. OF RUNS, 2."

TEMPTER:

Isn't it pride that leads you to the tomb?

PONTEFRACT:

No, just a simple sense of home from home.

The TEMPTER retires to put on a label:

"FOURTH TEMPTER, NO EXTRA FEE."
Leader of the Chorus alters the number of runs on the scoreboard to 3.

TEMPTER:

Or aren't you aiming at publicity?

PONTEFRACT:

Oh, go away and play.

This unusual reply disorganizes everybody. The TEMPTER fades out, but the CHORUS gather in a little cluster round the scoreboard, gesticulating as to whether to put up 4 runs or not.

Enter Three GUNMEN.

I want to die.

CHORUS:

But why? Oh, Pontefract, do tell us why.

Pause.

PONTEFRACT:

Quietly and impressively.

I will not tell you why.
In the next act they will inform you why,
In the footnotes you can determine why,
In the appendix you might find out why,
But I won't tell you why.

GUNMEN:

Then die! Then die!

They hit him. He falls.

CHORUS:

Hark to his dying groans:
In all our lives as crones
There's not occurred
A thing which stirred
Such horror in our bones.

GUNMEN:

Back there, back out of the way, everybody.

They face the audience.

It may seem to you, ladies and gentlemen, that we treated him a little rough.

FIRST GUNMAN:

But something had to happen every now and then, because of the Middle Ages.

SECOND GUNMAN:

And then, think what work we have given to the solicitors in the case Pontefract *v.* Pontifex *v.* Rex. Why, it went on for the next three and a half centuries.

THIRD GUNMAN:

And finally, we wanted to give a little publicity to the Southern Railway, so as to provide a bit of local colour for Canterbury.

EVERYBODY:

In a final chorus.

So now you know, (and let us all make merry)
Exactly what it was in Canterbury
Which helped high Heaven, and sifted right from wrong,
And moved the greatest of our bards to song.



Wood engraving by JOCELYN CROWE
Reproduced by permission of the Storrán Gallery

CORRESPONDENCE

"FORTY YEARS OF VERSE"

To the Editor of THE LONDON MERCURY AND BOOKMAN

SIR,—It is sad that the critics of contemporary poetry should be so unwilling to give it a hearing. Mr. Yeats, although he professes to admire the work of Auden, Spender, and Day Lewis, has apparently not *read* it. How else can one account for poem No. 368 in the Oxford Book beginning "This lunar beauty," and where two quite separate poems by Auden are amalgamated and presented as *one* poem? And now so distinguished a writer as Mr. Young confesses that the New Country is not on his map. Possibly he speaks as the observer on the heights of Olympus, for whom the contours of history show but faintly. But I venture to put forward the closer view: that the line of poetic movement is a curved one; that poetry has never been divorced from its cultural *milieu*; and that its temper *does* change. In the past the changes have been gradual, imperceptible almost, but in our own times the acceleration of living (in every sphere), the rapidly altering values have produced a state of comparative chaos where impulse and reaction are practically simultaneous. The contemporary man, whose cast of mind is predominantly scientific, i.e. inquiring, if he is at all sensitive to his environment, finds himself in a world with no stable background—a situation possibly without precedent in literature. There has been not so much "a gash at the root of our poetry" as an upheaval of our whole existence.

It was all very well for the secure Victorians to (as Eliot puts it) "ruminate"—in grandiloquent pentameters—the contemporary poet has to *speak out*, and as an individual; instead of writing within an established framework he has to evolve a dynamic form: that is to say, one that springs from the urgency and the nature of what he has to say. If he rejects the traditional eloquence, the high-sounding line, the easy rhyme, it is because he feels that these things are outworn; in fact his whole being, conditioned by the cataclysmic world he lives in, does not *move* to the "tune" of *Abide With Me*, he speaks in a different "tone of voice"—disillusioned, admonitory, ironical—and his experiments in technique spring, at their best, not from caprice but from an integrity directed to re-vitalize poetic expression. Admittedly there is a great deal of bogus stuff about; certainly some of our so-called poets are musically deaf. But it is to the best men that we must turn: I believe that if (putting Hymns A. & M. out of his mind) Mr. Young would re-read *The Hollow Men* he would feel that Eliot's rhythms were *compelling*; that he would be precipitated into that emotional attitude from which the poet speaks. The vigour of Sprung Rhythm imparts to verse that particular energy which the subject-matter of an Auden or a Day Lewis requires. I cannot begin a quarrel about the "arterial roads" line. Removed from its context it may not seem impressive; may I be permitted to re-instate it?

Listen. Can you not hear the entrance of a new theme?

You who go out alone, on tandem or on pillion,
Down arterial roads riding in April,
Or sad beside lakes where hill-slopes are reflected
Making fires of leaves, your high hopes fallen: . . .
Know you seek a new world, a saviour to establish
Long-lost kinship and restore the blood's fulfilment.

28 Bina Gardens, S.W.5.

Yours, etc., A. C. BOYD

THE THEATRE

THE BOY DAVID. By J. M. Barrie. His Majesty's Theatre.

THE MILLIONAIRESS. By Bernard Shaw. De la Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea.

SIR JOHN BARRIE'S long rest from play writing has not impaired his cleverness. *The Boy David*, a whimsical perversion of Biblical history and a Peter Panifying of David, is clearly much what it was intended to be; and if there is failure it comes about through an attempt to make a psychological study of a child who is half a fairy. With his cleverness Barrie has preserved all his old characteristics: he is as sentimental and as anti-sentimental as ever. Rose-coloured mists of sentiment still wreath and partially obscure a way of looking at life so little rose-coloured, so greyly realistic, that it might be called cynical if it were not impregnated with kindliness. This sentimentalist's disbelief in progress, the hope which has inspired most of the leaders among his contemporaries, seems never to have wavered. In *The Admirable Crichton* he smiled at the idea of social equality, in *Dear Brutus* at the idea of the perfectibility of mankind, in *Mary Rose* threw doubt on the wisdom of wishing to put back the clock, and in *Peter Pan* symbolized a humanity which does not want to grow up and had better be left to play with its toys.

Thoroughly consistent with this dryly ironic conservatism—pessimism would be too solemn a word for such a philosophy—is the satire lurking beneath the sentiment of *The Boy David*. It is pointed against man's incurably childish habit of taking credit for what some power outside himself, or even fortuitous circumstance, has enabled him to achieve. In different degrees Saul and David, both the anointed of the Lord, are guilty of the same transgression. Alone they did what they did! It is the way of men to boast like children. It can't be helped—and perhaps it doesn't matter. For in the Edinburgh production Saul and Samuel, presumptuous king and faithful prophet, meeting after death, cannot remember what parts they played on earth; so, linking ghostly arms, they go blissfully away, Heaven knows where.

This theme, whether by accident or design, turns to advantage the physical slighthness and elfin quality of Miss Elisabeth Bergner. It would be hard to imagine her as the heroic he-youngster of Biblical history slaying single-handed and in the name of the Lord of Hosts a bear and a lion and Goliath. But as a puny child helped on occasion to heroic heights by the supernatural being known to him as the Other One Miss Bergner is perfectly cast. The physical frailty of the actress reinforces the drama point by point. In the end the play depends on the size of the hero. David, boasting to Jonathan that alone he slew Goliath, is easily overthrown in a friendly wrestling match with his playmate. Then he knows that not he but the Other One slew Goliath; but we leave him struggling vaingloriously to carry on his shoulder the heavy spear which is the trophy of his prowess and

presumably the symbol of the same denial that has undone the presumptuous Saul.

But the most interesting figure in the play is not David but Saul. David has too much of the fairy in his composition to do more than charm us, and the part calls upon Miss Bergner for only those talents which she showed in *Escape Me Never*. But Saul is a man divided against himself, ambition warring against duty and his love for David against the conviction that he must kill the boy or be supplanted. Superbly played by Mr. Godfrey Tearle, the doomed king dominates the stage. The scenes in which the two make friends as fellow shepherds and David unconsciously reveals that Samuel has anointed him in succession to Saul, and Saul, torn by the inner conflict, hurls his javelin, are the best of the play. They are Biblical history turned into stage narrative with all Barrie's old skill. The last act, presenting David's vision of the future, makes an effect of waywardness. Its invention is comparatively trivial, and too soon the tension wears thin. But it is probable none the less that *The Boy David* will take a place among Barrie's major plays. There are masterly touches, and then it seems that childish charm and doom can march together unforgettably.

The Millionaire, on the other hand, though tolerably good entertainment, is definitely one of Mr. Shaw's minor plays. In writing it characterization evidently bothered him hardly at all, and he seems to have depended as much on the preface to make his meaning clear as some cartoonists depend on letterpress. From the preface we gather that Epifania, the loquacious heroine of the intellectual farce, is a "boss," born, like Bonaparte and Lenin, booted and spurred to ride roughshod over the rest of us, and that she thrives destructively in every known state of society. In the play she is a woman who has inherited millions and the knack to make more, but having no specific interest in power she concentrates her talents on the ruthless search for a suitable husband. He turns out to be an Egyptian doctor with no wish to marry her, and protected from her by his mother's provision that the woman who marries her son must go out into the world for six months with no more than 200 piastres. Epifania reorganizes a sweated labour den and turns a failing "pub" into a prosperous hotel, thereby winning the Egyptian and reconciling him to defeat by the beauty of her superbly rhythmic pulse. The entertainment is a combination of farce, fisticuffs, and random disquisition on politics, philosophy, and love, and in the course of it many good things are said and some amusingly farcical things are done. Yet we cannot help feeling that the story needs a stronger turning-point, and the discussion more concentration. As playgoers we are denied the fun of seeing Epifania hoist with her own petard; and as politicians we are denied any hint as to how we may protect ourselves from the born bosses. If we turn for further enlightenment to the preface we find that Mr. Shaw has no remedies more sensational than educational reform and death duties. The piece offers acting limited opportunities, and the Matthew Forsyth Players who undertook its first performance in this country spoke it well and accurately.

A. V. COOKMAN

ART

I COMMENTED last month on Mr. Matthew Smith as an artist who found his chief means of expression in colour and handling. As if to modify that impression, he was succeeded at Messrs. Tooth's gallery in December by Mr. Epstein, showing some flower paintings in gouache. In these pictures the elimination of form had been carried much farther. In fact, form was almost entirely eliminated. This is surprising in an artist whom one knows primarily as a sculptor, but there is a link in the large part played by the handling in the sculptural work itself. Mr. Epstein had already given us more than a hint of this side of his personality in his paintings of Epping Forest. But these were relatively feeble. He seemed to have hit upon a certain range of colour and a certain way of handling gouache, which were pleasant enough when one saw one example, but which were not truly expressive. That criticism cannot be made of the flower pieces. The absence of form and design limits them to the function of decoration, but once that is granted they illustrate what an extraordinary vitality can be given to decorative painting by vigour of colour and touch. The criticism which might be made is rather of such a degree of vitality in a decorative art as limiting its use to very few *ensembles*. Such pictures would make it impossible to see anything else in a room in which they were placed. That would not matter when there was nothing else worth seeing. But it would be disastrous to place them in a room where there were other fine things of a quieter kind.

It was pleasant at the Wildenstein gallery to see some large figure subjects by Miss Ethel Walker. Her broken touch and abrupt introduction of dark patches of tone have a suitability to this genre, while being a handicap to portraiture. They give a vibrancy of colour and tone which carries to the distance at which such works must be viewed, and are largely responsible for one of the greatest charms of these works, the singing quality of the colour. This and the gentle swaying movement make them distinguished things, but there is a lack of completeness about the realization of the conception which leaves us interested but unsatisfied. They are like the remains of some great fresco, which tell one that there was once a fine painting there, rather than the fresco itself in its original beauty. Miss Walker is perhaps at her best in landscapes and seascapes, where her style of painting has also its obvious applications, and where she seems able more fully to realize her conceptions.

The exhibition of six French painters at the Leicester Galleries and the Christmas Exhibition at the Zwemmer Gallery represented on the one hand the more conservative and on the other the more experimental sides of contemporary French and allied painting. That is, if one can by now include Monsieur Matisse and even Monsieur Segonzac in the former category. In the catalogue of an exhibition held shortly after the war Bennett claimed that Monsieur Matisse had now the air of an old master. Certainly the little landscape lent to the Leicester Galleries by Mr. G. Eumorfopoulos has much of that air, in the sense that it has those qualities which Ruskin in his

modern painters criticized in the old masters of landscape. It has the classical qualities of restraint, poise, and completeness, the result of "the irreverent habit of judgment instead of admiration" which Ruskin attacked in the criticism of the classical attitude, serving as an introduction to the summary of his views on Claude and Poussin in the fifth book. For all his modern palette-knife technique there was the same sense of order about the very fine still-life exhibited by Monsieur Segonzac. The *intimistes*, Bonnard and Vuillard, did not in this exhibition appear very *intime*. The Vuillard *Les Confidences*, which contained very lovely colour and tone in the green dress, was charming but remote. Otherwise, perhaps, these artists were not at their best. Better examples of Bonnard were the decorative early landscape at the Wildenstein Gallery and the *Interior* at Tooth's. More *intime*, in feeling as opposed to subject, were the Utrillos. It would be impossible, one imagines, to render more intimately the texture of a line of houses than Utrillo did in *rue de Beaulieu* and *une rue à Sannois*, or the atmosphere of a little *place* than he did in *Église de Montmagny*.

It was interesting to see at the Zwemmer Gallery some very good work by an artist who must have shown very rarely in England, Monsieur Borès. Notable among his pictures was one of a bull-fight in very fine decorative colour, mainly red and black, and with strong rhythmical line. Among the works by artists better known in England was a largish pen-drawing* by Monsieur Picasso of a male and a female nude. The light, delicate movement of the one towards the other was remarkable even for this artist, as also were the grouping of the two figures and the placing of them on the paper. Another good work in line by Monsieur Picasso, an etching, was that of two female nudes by a tree. Here the modifications in the line were dictated by its rhythm, and there were none of the violent distortions which detract from some of his drawing, such as placing the upper half of a figure one way and the lower half the other. This occurs in an illustration to Ovid that was shown in the exhibition. It may be defended as merely an extension of the practice of the Greek vase-painters in showing parts of the body which cannot be seen at the same time. But it is in the extension that the trouble arises. One knows too well the dynamics of the human form for *large* portions of the body to be treated in this way without the destruction of one's impression of form and movement, the essentials of drawing.

WILLIAM GIBSON

* See plate facing page 325.

MUSIC

THE BRITISH MUSIC DRAMA OPERA COMPANY has effected a happy reconciliation in its name. Music drama and opera have hitherto meant two opposed ideals, loosely speaking the literary and the musical extremes of emphasis. I believe it was the company's producer, Mr. Vladimir Rosing, who insisted on the inclusion of both names: with the unfortunate effect that the two cancelled out, leaving no one any the wiser as to whether it is the drama or the music Mr. Rosing wished to emphasize.

The performance of *Madame Butterfly* given by the company at Covent Garden on November 19th did not enlighten me. Puccini, judged by any of his works but *Gianni Schicchi*, is a purveyor of cheap, obvious, effective melodrama. Judged by *Madame Butterfly* alone, he is little more than an inferior Sullivan; indeed, large passages of *Butterfly* are nearer the *Geisha*. All the attempts at local colour—Japanese and American—are complete failures, and only comparable to the "Oriental" or other "effects" which are the stock-in-trade of the average cinema organist. The choruses, with the exception of the off-stage chorus at the end of Act II, are entirely conventional and lifeless; the whole work revolves round the two or three central figures. Helena Dysart's *Butterfly* was not an outstanding performance, but without any exceptional beauty of voice, she contrived to give a sympathetic and fairly convincing interpretation of the part, happier in the early, amorous stages and not so successful in the banal little tragedy. Henry Wendon sang well as Pinkerton, though his voice has not got the emotional quality essential for the love-duet and "Addio, fiorito asil"; correctly clean-limbed as a lieutenant in the U.S.A. Navy—though should he have been allowed to wear patent leather shoes when he went on shore?—he remained distressingly aloof and "essentially decent" throughout his cynical confession of faith to Sharpless and his love-making with *Butterfly*. Stanley Pope, as Sharpless, and Enid Cruickshank, as Suzuki, were competent. The translation was appalling. Colloquial for the most part—"that's a very easy-going gospel," sang Mr. Pope to Mr. Wendon's unconvincing cynicism—the words were apt to become conventionally poetic when "romance" appeared, and *Butterfly*'s wedding kimono became "robes of purest white." Mr. Arthur Hammond did his best with the patchy, vulgar little score, and the production, with the exception of a few details in the clothes, was good. But, even for a box-office success, was it necessary to choose this most banal and vulgar of all Puccini's works?

Berlioz's *Romeo and Juliet* was conducted by Albert Wolff at the Queen's Hall on December 3rd. It is an odd work even for Berlioz, but it has the most beautiful and moving moments. The choral recitative is excellent and gives an impersonality to the narrative, against which the soloists stand out the more sharply. The most successful is the Fourth Scene, opening with the double chorus off the stage and going on to the garden by night, and *Romeo and Juliet*'s love-making—one of the most beautiful orchestral

pictures in the whole of music. The Queen Mab Scherzo needed far more brilliant conducting and playing; but Juliet's funeral march was beautifully done. The text is inchoate and often banal, the fault not only of the translation; and the only device which would, I think, hold the whole work together is the fitting to it of a film. An adaptation of Shakespeare, and silent except for Berlioz's vocal numbers, would serve to point the orchestral music and to give coherence to the narrative. This is surely an admirable opportunity for a "high-brow" producer.

Egon Petri is one of the most distinguished pianists of the day. As a friend and pupil of Busoni, and an ardent admirer of his compositions, he has allied himself with a definite section of the modern movement, and from this he has not deflected his course. The main characteristic of his playing at the Queen's Hall, in the Courtauld-Sargent concerts of December 7th and 8th, was stylistic purity. His taste is excellent, puristic to such a degree that he is not really a concert but a chamber pianist. In the slow movement of Mozart's "Coronation" Concerto, for example, he refused any softening or emotionalizing of the theme, keeping his touch light, underlining nothing, allowing the music to sing itself and obtruding no trait of his own. But this very chastity unfitted him for Liszt's Second Concerto, that beautiful gallimaufry of sweetness, violence, religiosity, and diabolism. Mr. Petri satisfied the demands—the legitimate demands—of Liszt's style; but he went no further. He had no sympathy with the moodiness of the music; he remained unruffled, unmelting to the 'cello's passionate duet with him, unchallenged by the aggressiveness of the trombones. Technically his performance was flawless; but I had personally rather have heard a less sure technician who was more in sympathy with the composer.

In this respect Louis Krasner was the perfect soloist in Alban Berg's Violin Concerto, which was conducted by Sir Henry Wood at the Queen's Hall on December 9th. It is not an easy work to grasp at one hearing, more difficult than *Wozzeck* or the Lyric Suite. It is hard to feel that the consistence of any work in which Schönberg's twelve-tone technique is applied is genuinely musical. Structurally and logically such works are satisfactory on paper, but music has nothing whatever to do with paper; and a logic that is felt by no one but the composer and those listeners who have studied his score in detail is worthless. There is an essential aimlessness in any music which is completely free of tonality; and this is compensated by a *visual* logic. The application of these principles produces music which is often full of dramatic appeal, music which can thrill; but when, as in the last movement of this concerto, the composer is profoundly touched by emotion, the idiom flags. The variations on a chorale from *O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort* remained, to my ear, exercises; and brilliant musician as Berg was, the climax of the concerto is a failure. Mr. Krasner, for whom the work was written, played the solo part with understanding and sympathy.

MARTIN COOPER

FILMS

THE GREEN PASTURES. *American.*

SABOTAGE. *British.*

THE WHITE ANGEL. *American.*

WHEN you look through a stereoscope, usually finding it at first not quite in focus, you see two blurred pictures, each confusing the other. With the focusing screw you bring them into line—and at the moment of coincidence they merge suddenly into a single picture with an appearance of solid, three-dimensional actuality. Something like this ought to happen in film production. To start with, there must always be two pictures—one consisting of the raw material, the subject-matter, the other of ideas, prophetic images, in the director's mind. If the film is to turn out well, firmly shaped and with a quality of depth—a quality which makes the spectator feel that he is looking into a real world, not limited by the four sides of the screen—the two pictures have to merge harmoniously, during production, into one. Only this will give an effect of living unity, in which every part of the pattern expresses the spirit of the whole. To a rare degree *The Green Pastures*—a film version of Marc Connelly's famous negro play—achieves this effect. Its material comes from Roark Bradford's rendering of Bible stories as they appear to the child-like imagination of negro believers in the Southern States, and Bradford should have the credit for first turning these dreams into narrative form, clothing them with dialogue and pictorial detail. Connelly, having made them into a play, "was afraid for a long while to sell the film rights because I thought the show might 'go Hollywood' on me and want settings of golden pillars and alabaster walks, instead of a simple oak glade in the bayou country." It is largely because these obvious temptations have been avoided that the film succeeds; there is an easy transition from this heaven above the clouds, where "de Lawd" in a frock-coat at the angel's picnic is like the vicar smiling at a school-treat, to the wicked land of Babylon, where a boastful king holds court in a flashy night-club. These two scenes, so unlike in content, are woven from one piece; through them runs the same simple morality and humour and dramatic sense. There are times, too, when this dramatic sense brings off swiftly impressive effects—the creation of Eve, for instance, by the calling of her name, or the moment when Noah, shown as a humble negro preacher, perceives the identity of the friendly visitor who sits in his cottage and tells him how to build the Ark. Only at the end, I think, does a slightly false note intrude, when a kind of vision of the New Testament is introduced and "de Lawd" learns that he will have to suffer with his own creation and cannot overcome its tendencies to evil merely by punishing them. The theology here is sound enough, but Connelly, one feels, is presenting it in a guise of his own, tinged with sophisticated sentiment; he is no longer interpreting quite faithfully the negro mind. But this episode is only a small

part of the film; the rest is wonderfully warm and natural—a true folk-tale acted with entire sincerity and enjoyment by an all-negro cast.

Sabotage, directed by Alfred Hitchcock, is woven with equal skill; indeed, style and subject come together almost too neatly, almost with a mechanical click. Mr. Hitchcock, I feel, cares too little for his characters; like a scientist in a pictorial laboratory, he pulls the strings and makes them dance for the sake of an ironically twisted situation or an effective climax. The story takes its origin from Conrad's novel, *The Secret Agent*, but little remains except the name of the anarchist, Verloc, who in the film version keeps a cheap cinema in the suburbs and steals out at night to put sand in the dynamos at the Battersea power station. His employers, dissatisfied, order him to blow up Piccadilly Circus; by this time he is under police observation, and sends his wife's schoolboy brother to deposit a time bomb in the tube station cloak-room. The boy is delayed by the Lord Mayor's show and is blown up on the way in a bus. The film seems to me to have little human reality; so little is revealed about the relationship of Mr. and Mrs. Verloc that I was impelled afterwards to look at the programme to make sure that they were really meant to be husband and wife. As individuals, however, they are well acted by Oscar Homolka and Sylvia Sydney, and the film marches swiftly through a variety of excitements. Its local colour and its minor incidents are often excellent—Verloc's meeting with his anonymous chief in the Aquarium at the Zoo, and particularly the scenes in the Islington bird-shop, where the Professor (superbly sketched by William Dewhurst) makes bombs in the back parlour. With anything slightly grotesque and fictional Mr. Hitchcock is thoroughly at home, creating and enjoying it all beforehand in his mind; but to subdue himself to observe patiently ordinary human nature—this he seems to find too dull.

The White Angel, an American film about Florence Nightingale, is a good example of what happens when the two pictures in the stereoscope are not brought properly together. The producers were evidently anxious to avoid the old notion of Florence Nightingale as simply a ministering angel, sweet and patient, but they have nevertheless created an imaginary figure who refuses to fit convincingly into the historical circumstances of the story. And the result is that the Crimean background has itself to be left far too vague; we are never told exactly what were the conditions of Florence Nightingale's appointment or what was the extent of her authority during one dispute or another. If these facts had been clearly stated, they would have themselves sufficed to show what sort of woman Florence must have been to accomplish what she did—but then she would have had to be played by someone less lovely and charming than Miss Kay Francis, who would surely, one feels, have won over the crustiest of military martinets in a very short time. The film is well-meaning, with moving moments, particularly during the earlier sequences, when Florence is struggling to obey her Crimean destiny; but the total effect is blurred, history not seen objectively but through a star-lit mist.

CHARLES DAVY

BOOK PRODUCTION NOTES

THE PUBLISHER AND HIS PRINTER*

Mr. DE LA MARE'S stimulating lecture well deserves to reach in this printed form an audience far greater than that which was privileged to listen to it at Stationers' Hall. It is a survey of the part which a publisher may take in directing the production of his books provided he is well endowed both with good taste and an eye quick to seize on the details and potentialities of the methods and processes which go to their making. He speaks with the authority of one who has successfully played that part in a publishing office whose books are outstanding examples of such fruitful direction in the details of their production. Such personal control by the publisher was not, however, quite so rare in the not remote past as Mr. de la Mare suggests. Mr. A. J. A. Symons has recalled the good work done by some of the more enterprising publishers of the nineties; and Mr. de la Mare pays due tribute to the example of J. M. Dent, in whose memory his lecture was delivered. But many more names readily come to mind: Gleeson White, for instance, and John Lane, and A. H. Bullen and Philip Lee Warner, to mention but a few. As a printer I recall with gratitude the inspiration as well as the encouragement given to me at the Arden Press by Mr. Wilfred Meynell, when he was Managing Director of Burns and Oates; at that time both Francis Meynell and Stanley Morison were in his office, just emerging from their nonage. The printer, indeed, has every reason to welcome such co-operation and even such direction from the publisher for whom he works, when it comes from a nice appreciation of the many points of detail involved in printing and binding a book, and not from a mere stretching after novelty guided by no good aesthetic consideration. Mr. de la Mare touches on many of them, from the design of the book to its binding.

SHENVAL PIE†

THE "sponsors" of this new quarterly—Ellic Howe, Robert Harling, and James Shand—declare themselves "neither atavistic nor *avant garde*, neither traditionists nor traducers of tradition. We are, quite simply, contemporary." But the student who goes to the pages of this first number for examples of contemporary printing and for information about it will be bewildered by its make-up. He will find it difficult to see the trees for the jungle of specimens, insets, and advertisements which here confront him. In the lucid intervals he will come across many good things—articles, provocative and inspiring, by Francis Meynell, Rene Hague, Philip James, the "sponsors," and others; but it is sometimes difficult to trace where an article begins, is continued, or ends. When he has winnowed the good grain from the chaff, he will find excellent value for his florin.

B. H. NEWDIGATE.

* *A Publisher on Book Production*. The Sixth Dent Memorial Lecture. By Richard de la Mare. Dent. 1s. 6d.

† *Typography*, 1. Quarterly. The Shenval Press. 2s. 7s. 6d. annually.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

MR. A. EDWARD NEWTON, perhaps the most widely known of all living American book-collectors, can never write otherwise than readably and entertainingly. As a bookish *causeur* he is invariably amusing, for he has handled many books and enjoyed reading them, and has obviously gone through life with a twinkle in his eye. His friends and acquaintances know the truth of this last remark from personal observation, but even if one had never met Mr. Newton, one would know it from his books. His latest volume, *Bibliography and pseudo-Bibliography* (Oxford University Press, 7s. 6d.) once again demonstrates Mr. Newton's qualities. It is a small book, with only one hundred and sixteen pages of text, and contains three lectures delivered by him at the University of Pennsylvania as Rosenbach Fellow in Bibliography.

To Mr. Newton, bibliography, when it loses itself among the minutiae connected with some unimportant book, becomes pseudo-bibliography—a term which he also applies to “points” which are without significance, even though occurring in an important book. “We should be reasonably sure,” he writes, “that a book or an author or a subject is worth intensive study before we lose ourselves in it.” And he proceeds to quote Benjamin Franklin’s “*Dost Thou Love Life?* Then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of.” This is sensible and true enough, but it leaves out of account the view of bibliography as an almost mathematical science, worthy to be exercised for its own sake—with as much pains and skill upon old railway time-tables as upon Shakespeare quartos. Mr. Newton’s two other lectures are primarily concerned with “Book Catalogues” and with “Essays and Essayists.” But whatever his subject, he writes pleasantly, never shrinking from a digression, or a good anecdote if it happens to come into his mind while he is, so to speak, turning the page, and always with a real enjoyment of books and their associations.

THE first two portions of M. Emile Brouwet’s collection of Napoleonic letters, documents, and relics were sold in Paris in 1934 and 1935. The third portion appeared at Sotheby’s on December 8th and 9th, and the 358 lots brought in a total of £4,064. To those who saw the elaborate catalogue this may seem a small sum. But it has to be remembered that this catalogue (printed in French in order to be uniform with previous catalogues of the collection) was intended not solely to serve the purposes of the sale, but also as a careful record of M. Brouwet’s collection, and many of the items were therefore described at lengths quite unjustified by their saleroom values, though possibly not by their historic interest. The highest individual price was £280, given by Messrs. Maggs, for 209 letters from Marie Louise to her friend Victoire de Poutet.

I. A. WILLIAMS



PEN DRAWING
by PABLO PICASSO
Reproduced by permission of the Zwemmer Galleries

NEW LITERATURE

THE CABINET UNVEILED

By Thomas Jones

CABINET GOVERNMENT. By W. Ivor

Jennings. *Cambridge University Press*. 21s. The office of Prime Minister is of all offices the most difficult to fill for its occupant has the most momentous decisions to make and the most numerous masters to please. His tenure is unstable and his rival, eager to dislodge him, confronts and assaults him daily. The Governor of the Bank of England has many critics but few masters and his edicts are caviare to the general. The privacy which protects the Bank of England is denied to 10, Downing Street. The Prime Minister cannot sneeze without the report thereof resounding through the chancelleries of Europe and an attack of lumbago may retard or advance the millennium of world peace by a fortnight. Nor can the Archbishop of Canterbury, fulfilling his ancient, exalted, and sacred office, claim to carry a heavier burden than the Prime Minister in as much as he is threatened by no jealous competitor and his parishioners can draw upon a supply of restraining grace.

In view of these impressive considerations it is remarkable that no simple guide to the highest ministerial office is known to exist. A textbook is clearly called for. Manuals have been written for the instruction of princes and the behoof of bishops by courtiers and divines, but no hardened bureaucrat has written a guide for cabinet ministers, if we except Sir Henry Taylor's *Statesman*, now forgotten. The *Gleanings* of Gladstone, the *Recollections* of Morley, the *Reflections* of Asquith, and the *Memoirs* of Lloyd George are not so much concerned with making their successors wise as in demonstrating their own wisdom.

More than one retired civil servant must have toyed with the notion of writing a textbook for ministers. But the Official Secrets Act is on the statute book and it is only cabinet ministers who can circumvent it. Secrecy is still for the civil servant one of the commandments strictly observed. But the veil is not infrequently pierced by ministerial biographers and autobiographers, and when all their revelations are combined there is quite a big hole in the curtain. When to this is added what Dr. Jennings has pieced together from private conversations and unpublished documents there is little or no mystery left at the end of the long passage in 10, Downing Street. In this book there is published for the first time a systematic and detailed account of Cabinet procedure even to the construction of the Agenda and the outline of a model Minute. But the book is not only an unveiling of the interior mechanism of the Cabinet; it is a careful and accurate description of the machinery of central administration as it functions to-day, with sufficient historical retrospect to enable its development during the last hundred years to be understood.

The shelves of students of politics are bent with monumental biographies of statesmen in single, double, and triple tomes; their cupboards and drawers stuffed with Blue books, parliamentary debates, newspaper cuttings. Dr. Jennings has gone through all this material with immense industry and has extracted and classified facts and opinions under their appropriate heads: The Choice of a Prime Minister, Ministers at Work, Treasury Control, Patronage and Honours, and so forth. We can now make a bonfire

of our own chaotic junk. The venerable precedents which civil servants bandy in the Club, the apt quotations which they knowingly exchange from Melbourne "down the years" to Esher, all are here, or as nearly all as no matter. Here, then, at last is the indispensable *Companion to Political Studies* for which students have so long sighed. It should be kept up to date by quinquennial revision. The chapter on *The Sovereign and the Cabinet* is already ripe for revision.

The author's treatment is expository. He enumerates rather than evaluates. The wood is apt to be obscured by the trees. The drawback of the method is common to books built up on the technique of the Webbs: "one sheet and one event in time and space." One feels the bones of the skeleton card-index poking through the sentences.

But this is only another way of saying that Dr. Jennings has not done, has not attempted to do, for this century what Bagehot did for the last. There are diversities of styles. There are thousands of facts admirably arranged in these five hundred pages; there is not one memorable aphorism. When you read a page of Bagehot you know what a Prime Minister

is like; when you read Dr. Jennings you know what his duties are. Bagehot lights up the dark places of the Constitution with an incandescent phrase or paragraph; the light of Dr. Jennings is that of many candles held together. Occasionally he suffers from myosis. Thus he writes of the first Labour Government: "Possibly, too, the difficulties of the Labour ministers were aggravated by their own inexperience." And of the Press: "The Press is not always left without guidance." One wonders how the numerous departmental Press Officers earn their salaries.

Errors of fact are rare and time will correct them. Did Mr. Baldwin do nothing to prepare his colleagues for his Plymouth speech? Did Mr. Lloyd George draft the King's Speech on the opening of the Parliament of Northern Ireland in June 1921? Pakenham in *Peace by Ordeal* gives the credit to General Smuts, and Mr. Churchill has another version in *Aftermath*. Cabinet Minutes go a long way farther back than Lord Grenville and Fox. The index is not adequate to a work of this importance—the most realistic contribution to the study of the machinery of government which has been published for many a day.

BOSWELL'S JOURNAL

By F. A. Barrett

BOSWELL'S JOURNAL OF A TOUR TO THE HEBRIDES WITH SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D. Now First Published from the Original Manuscript. *Heinemann*. 21s.

It is generally known that some years ago a large quantity of Boswell's papers were ascertained to exist at Castle Malahide, near Dublin, the seat of Lord Talbot de Malahide, a descendant of the biographer. They were acquired by Colonel Isham, and have since been in process of publication in a limited edition. A few years later than the original discovery "another extraordinary treasure-trove" (to quote

the Publisher's Note) "came to light" in the same house, "when through a happy accident an old croquet-box in an unused cupboard was found to contain another large batch of Boswell papers. First in importance among the documents . . . was the original manuscript of the *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*." This is the manuscript that has now been printed. It is not complete. In addition to losses in bulk at beginning and end there are minor intermediate gaps, and altogether about an eighth of the whole is missing. The deficiencies are supplied in the present book from Boswell's

third edition, with some help from the first.

Boswell is the classic example of the "chiel takin' notes." And, faith, he printed them. For this reason—because he printed with so little reserve—the discovery of the manuscript, welcome as it is, provides no sensation. Boswell's contemporary journal of the tour was revised for publication by himself and Malone, and it stands to the credit both of Boswell's courage and of the broad-mindedness of Malone that so much that was important, however arresting, was admitted and that so little that was significant was excised or smoothed over.

The principal omissions fall under two heads—Boswell's moralizings and sentimental reflections and his topographical notes. As regards the latter, apart from considerations of space, which were pressing, Boswell distrusted his powers of description, and in any case the ground had already been covered in Johnson's own published account of the tour. For the disappearance of the reflections and, in general, of the exposure of the author's own mental reactions to the environment of the moment we need not in this case seek reasons of delicacy. It is explained by the fact that Boswell was concentrating on the portrait of Johnson, and he cheerfully sacrificed his own prominence to this end. The restoration to the text of these candid and ingenuous self-revelations is an important gain. Boswell's own personality bulks more largely, and his right on his own merits to a place in the sun has long ceased to be questioned.

The atmosphere created by the recovered passages depends less on their individual importance than on their cumulative effect. For the reasons given, little is added to the picture of Johnson. We do, however, find him in a moment of irritation referring to a minister who had been his host as "the most ignorant booby and the grossest bastard." He is seen, too, twice mimicking Lady Macdonald, who, he elsewhere remarks, "might be cut out of a cabbage." On

one of these occasions he "takes off" the lady asking, with her mouth full, "for some wine and water." On the other, while still in bed in the morning, he gives an imitation of her insipid mannerisms for Boswell's benefit. "To see a beauty," comments Boswell on the latter occasion, "represented by Mr. Johnson was excessively high. I told him it was a masterpiece and that he must have studied it much. 'Ay,' said he." The dissatisfaction of the traveller with this lady's husband, Sir Alexander Macdonald, was already known from the published tour, but the theme is much expanded in the original journal.

I fell upon him [says Boswell, who was his guest at the time] with perhaps too much violence upon his behaviour to his people; on the meanness of his appearance here; upon my lady's neither having a maid, nor being dressed better than one. In short I gave him a volley.

But the storm subsided and "we had moor-fowl for supper this night, which comforted me." They never forgot the "animal," as they call him, and six weeks later the sight of currant jelly on the breakfast table was recalling to Boswell the treacle of the penurious Macdonald. Like the moor-fowl, the jelly (of which Boswell was extremely fond) played the part of an anodyne. The passage referring to it immediately succeeds a sentimental outburst on his relations with his father.

As might be expected, Boswell frankly relates his own lapses from sobriety. In the published tour the entry for the 6th September records with simplicity that the travellers "set out," but this placid opening conceals the circumstance that Boswell was "in bad plight." We now learn that on the previous night he had "drunk freely of punch by way of being social and after supper drank freely of port by way of keeping off a *taedium vitae*." Small wonder if he "awaked a good deal uneasy." But worse was to come. On the 20th October, under the spell of the cathedral at Iona, the emotional Boswell was expressing the hope

that ever after having been in that holy place he would maintain an exemplary conduct. On the very next day he drank himself sick over two bowls of punch. It is to be noted that though he suppressed both these passages when revising his journal, he did not do so from feelings of shame—witness his account in the published tour of the debauch on which he was rallied by Johnson. He cut them out because, as not involving Johnson, they were considered irrelevant.

There are numberless pleasurable minor touches. Words such as "worthylike" and "solemn-like," distasteful to Malone, have their glamour for us. On the episode of

the young woman who, sitting on Dr. Johnson's knee, insisted on kissing him, the published tour comments it was "highly comic." But Boswell had written "to me it was a very high scene," and "little wench" in the journal becomes "beauty" in the tour. Nor would we willingly miss the original version of the landing at Icolmkill, when Boswell, quite overcome by the occasion, proceeded to shake the Sage by the hand. "What an addition was it to Icolmkill to have the Rambler upon the spot."

The book is assured of a grateful acceptance. It has been edited with skill and good sense.

THE ABYSSINIAN CRIME

By Henry W. Nevinson

CAESAR IN ABYSSINIA. By G. L. Steer.
Hodder and Stoughton. 12s. 6d.

The treatment of "native races" by civilized nations has always been atrocious, for there was always the hope of profit in subjugating or exterminating them. And was there not the chance of promulgating more decent manners and a more merciful religion? But of all the crimes in this ghastly record, Mussolini's destruction of Abyssinia counts among the worst. In an address scattered from aeroplanes, to the people of Addis Ababa near the end of the war, the Commander of the Italian army explained: "These leaflets should be a greeting to the Ethiopian people. I do not want the Christian Ethiopian people to be destroyed. We bring peace and civilization. But if there is resistance," he goes on, "then the Italian army will destroy and kill without pity, the aeroplanes will massacre from the air and destroy everything that exists."

Such were the aims of the modern Caesar in Rome, and such were his methods of bringing peace and civilization. The aims were not unusual; the methods, considering the numbers engaged and brevity of the conflict, were hardly to be sur-

passed for bloodthirsty and pitiless brutality in the annals of history.

While I have been wandering about in various quarters of Africa, I have noticed that nearly the whole of that enormous continent was occupied or dominated by one or other European nation—England, France (which has the largest surface, "mostly sand," as old Lord Salisbury observed), Portugal, Spain, Belgium, Italy, and Germany (with surface now much reduced or even blotted out to England's advantage). The only region that could be called free and independent was Abyssinia. Early in this century I learnt (an easy lesson) that Italy had already set her eyes upon this one independent region as her prey, and when Mussolini's chance came he made the grab. A tyrant's surest means of retaining power has always been by war and aggression; and this tyrant clutched his opportunity in a petty dispute over some little frontier wells at Wal Wal. That was just two years ago, and after an unequal and peculiarly brutal war of eighteen months Mussolini, or whoever the legal governor of Italy may be, could proclaim himself Emperor of Eastern Africa.

Mr. Steer, as one of *The Times* war

correspondents, here narrates the abomination of the campaign with minute observation and accuracy. The course of his duties led him to nearly all the districts of conflict and crisis, especially to the north-east and south-east, and to the centre at the capital town of Addis. Particularly valuable are his accounts of the nature of a land so little explored, and a people so far above the average Africans in mind and civilization. He tells us vividly of the chief Ras, round whom the men of each clan cling for guidance and protection, much as Highland clans used to cling round their chieftains. But of special interest is his picture of the Emperor, whom many English people have lately come to know for his noble bearing, politeness, and dignified sorrow. Mr. Steer writes:

He spoke without hesitation and without any correction, quickly, with the authoritative voice of a logician. He had an immensely able mind, and he knew his own views to the last detail.

He had the gift of appearing at all times, even in the midst of war, completely detached and poised above the *mêlée*, pursuing his quiet, rather delicate and well-dressed life without noting overmuch the noise which surrounded him. In the house he worked day and night, organizing the last detail in the construction of the two northward roads—Codifying and improving his regulations for the Ethiopian tactic against western arms—all except the spraying of mustard gas, which he did not foresee.

He did not foresee the abominable use of mustard gas, and it was gas that ruined him. His want of foresight sprang from this admirable man's one great error. He trusted the League of Nations. His confident belief in the honour of western Europe, especially of England, was his undoing. "He placed his hope," we are told, "entirely in the efficacy of League assistance. He decided to be the first to appeal to Article XVI of the Covenant as an aid in war." He regarded his own army as only a delaying force till help came from members of the League. All that came from the Powers of the League was an embargo that deprived him of arma-

ments, and allowed a full supply of oil to the Italian aeroplanes that destroyed him.

Perhaps one other curse came from members of the League, and that was the Hoare-Laval proposal to divide his Empire up among the avaricious claimants. That underhand proposal he scornfully and justly rejected, and it is to the credit of British and French public opinions that they rejected it too—rejected so decisively that it caused the political overthrow of the two Foreign Ministers involved.

The British Government [says Mr. Steer] had entered upon sanctions simply as an experiment. They wanted to see "if they would work." Their approach to the problem was purely scientific. It showed something of the vivisectionist's superiority to the material on which he labours.

Mr. Steer follows the campaign with a detail that shows him as an intelligent traveller in an almost unknown land. He estimates the forces on both sides without exaggeration—an immense superiority of trained and disciplined Italian troops against hordes of gallant but unorganized semi-savages, without modern arms and ignorant of modern tactics or strategy. One more evidence of the Emperor's wisdom he quotes from the address to his country on the day that Italy declared war:

Soldiers, I give you this advice. Be cunning, be savage, face the enemy one by one, two by two, five by five in the fields and mountains. Do not take white clothes, do not mass as now. Hide, strike suddenly, fight the nomad war, steal, snipe, and kill singly.

It was wise and necessary advice, but the ancient habits of his scattered subjects prevented them from following it. Their method of warfare was to charge in mass, and they had hardly one opportunity for practising it. The terror of aeroplanes dropping high-explosive bombs and burning gas forced them to scatter and seek shelter. The number of their dead was enormous. Well may the author of this instructive volume sum up at the end:

Of the many that I saw dead or dying, there is not one whose blood does not lie on the head of Mussolini. He is the deliberate murderer of all of them.

THE WORLD SINCE THE LEAGUE FAILED

By R. C. K. Ensor

THE FAITH OF AN ENGLISHMAN.

By Sir Edward Grigg. *Macmillan*. 10s. 6d. Sir Edward Grigg has written a book such as only the late F. S. Oliver and a few others succeeded in compassing in their day—as topical and as contemporary throughout as a pamphlet, yet on a scale and with a breadth of outlook to which pamphlets do not aspire. Thrown off confessedly at high speed and obviously under a sort of afflatus, it carries the reader along by its wide sweep of thought and knowledge. It betrays the haste of its origin by some redundancies and a few apparent inconsistencies; but the actual writing is brilliant throughout, and often memorable.

His subject is the relation of Great Britain and its Empire to the world, and particularly to the League of Nations, the Great Powers, and the threat of world war. A good deal of his space is given to arguing the impossibility of hoping for collective security in the form of a coercive League. Plenty that he says under this head would have been thought rank heresy by liberal and democratic opinion in England a year ago; but since the tragic sequence of events in the Abyssinian case it may look for much wider acceptance. Even so its insistent and remorseless logic should render a real service to many by obliging them, whether or not they go the whole way with it, to face the realities of a changed world, and recognize that conceptions of League power and authority, which were plausible, not merely before the United States left the League, but down to the death of Stresemann, have been rendered entirely obsolete by the developments since.

His view, broadly speaking, is that both Great Britain and the Dominions have made the mistake of supposing, in some degree, that through Geneva they could get security on the cheap. They all need

to see more distinctly that in London, and not at Geneva, lies the key to such security as they can rely on.

The security of Britain stands, in all essentials, for the security of the rest of the Commonwealth. If Britain were defeated in war and lost her sea power, as Germany lost hers in 1918, Canada would become of necessity a dependent of the United States, and all other parts of the Empire would live by leave of the strongest foreign navy within striking distance of their trade.

It is perhaps not generally realized that, independently of Great Britain's share in world trade, which is more than double that of any other country except the United States and Germany, four other areas of the Commonwealth—Canada, India, South Africa, and Australia—have each a trade exceeding Italy's. The British Navy is guardian to them all.

It is the maypole round which, like coloured ribbons, twine and twist the million varied activities of a Commonwealth that spans the world. Take away the maypole, and the ribbons, the world over, would flutter to the ground, or be seized by rude boys from adjoining villages.

Yet to the security of Britain and the great sea-ways, the Dominions, in peacetime, contribute nothing. Save for the land frontier of India, none of them has much local danger to guard against. But "the menace of these times," says Sir Edward Grigg, "is concentrated on Britain, which lies at the gates of Europe and enjoys no longer that insular immunity from invasion which has made her hitherto the most privileged and invulnerable of European countries. The idea that Britain's existence may be gravely imperilled has not yet entered the mind of the Dominions."

The re-armament of Britain, the holding together of the Commonwealth, and the recognition that Geneva, though it has

valuable functions of its own, can be no substitute for either, are thus the conclusions towards which Sir Edward Grigg feels his way. But it is not the way of the old-fashioned, arrogant sort of imperialist or militarist. He enlarges—no one more persuasively—on the peculiar need of Great Britain and her Empire for peace, and the certainty that even the most successful war must work them untold damage. He puts forward war-preparedness as affording the best chance of our escaping war.

In fact he goes on to develop the thesis that British re-armament, exempting France from the necessity of tying herself too closely to the Soviet, is likelier than anything else to avert the dreaded Continental war. Here his position does not always seem free from inconsistency. For

he is very conscious of the intense aversion which people feel, alike in Great Britain and overseas, to sacrificing their sons, brothers, husbands, or lovers on Continental battlefields, as they were sacrificed in 1914-18. At times he uses language about it whose frankness no out-and-out isolationist could exceed. Yet he is not an isolationist, because he is alive to Great Britain's geographical weaknesses, and knows that she could not place herself outside Europe if she would. His solution is that she should be part in and part out—that she should intervene in Continental affairs on a basis of limited liability. It is on this side that his argument invites most criticism. He may be clear in his own mind where a practical dividing line can be drawn, but he does not make it clear enough to his readers.

HAMLET RE-ANALYSED

By R. A. Scott-James

PREFACES TO SHAKESPEARE. By Harley Granville-Barker. Third Series.

Hamlet. Sidgwick and Jackson. 10s. 6d.

In his two earlier sets of *Prefaces* Mr. Granville-Barker dealt with eight plays. Here, in pursuance of his object of "studying one play thoroughly," he gives us what is really a full-length study of *Hamlet* based upon the consideration that Shakespeare was an actor-dramatist versed in the art of the theatre. We may think of it as written in the first place for the enlightenment of producers and actors. But clearly it will not stop at that. For his producers and actors, if they are to do their job as he would have them do it, must understand the whole movement of the play, must enter into the rendering of the characters, must appreciate Shakespeare's use of poetry and prose, and, in fact, must be students of his complete art. We may find ourselves considering minor

incidents as the play progresses step by step, but the interpretation of each, as given by Mr. Granville-Barker, appears as an added revelation of the art of the dramatist in pursuit of his major purpose.

Every student of Shakespeare is aware of two hindrances to appreciation, one arising from the difficulty of thinking oneself back into his time and realizing the conditions of his theatre, the second, from over-familiarity with his work and the mass of critical comment which obstructs fresh vision. Mr. Granville-Barker is able to break through a good many of these encumbrances by the necessity of getting down to the acting side of the plays; an actor, in Elizabethan times or our own, is always an actor; the words he has to speak and the movements he has to make bring him up against the stark necessities of a play; and the text in its essentials must to some extent

explain itself from within outwards when the play is put to the test of production.

But Mr. Granville-Barker, of course, has not wholly detached himself from the literary commentators, or achieved the impossible feat of becoming simply an Elizabethan. If he has scored a big success, as I think he has done, that is not only because of his practical stage experience, but because he has so many other qualifications for understanding the mind and imagination of Shakespeare. His admiration for Shakespeare's dramatic skill and stagecraft, so helpful in the main, occasionally leads him astray. He is too disposed to attribute every apparent lapse to dramatic design; and when occasionally the poet runs away with the dramatist, he is too ready with a plausible excuse for the escapade. Thus, when the Queen, describing Ophelia's drowning, "forgets herself in the description of the girl's death," and speaks apparently out of character, he justifies this dramatically on the ground that "people do take the moment's colour of some vivid experience." But surely the real truth is that Shakespeare could not resist the desire to describe the pitiful ending of Ophelia, and the poetic narrative, which is all his own, has to be put into the mouth of the Queen. And again, in contrasting the use of prose and verse, he says that "in the main, the prose Hamlet is never the innermost man," and goes on to show the dramatic necessity of the use of verse. Yet in the whole play there are no words which better reveal the innermost Hamlet than the prose lines in which he teaches Polonius how to use the players. And in Act II, Scene 2, the words beginning "This most excellent canopy" belong surely to one of those revealing passages which, according to Mr. Granville-Barker, should be in verse. But it is in prose. In this case, however, Mr. Granville-Barker may be justified. I have always felt that in this passage the text gives no more than the notes which Shakespeare intended to elaborate, in verse.

Mr. Granville-Barker has reduced the five acts to three "movements," which he traces in his illuminating way step by step. He considers the language from the point of view of the dramatist thinking in terms of dramatic effect, and some difficulties of scansion are thus resolved. He gives us at the end an analysis of all the principal characters. In regard to Hamlet's madness, I am surprised that he has not pointed out that the first person who takes Hamlet's "antic disposition" seriously is that diplomatic if "tedious old fool," Polonius, and that all the others take their cue from him; but Mr. Granville-Barker is far too good a judge of human nature to press the madness issue too far, or not to know the fineness of the edge which separates the distraction of passion and the ferocity of tragic irony from insanity. I should have expected him to emphasize a little more the extraordinary intellectual and humanitarian superiority of Hamlet, who, as in that reply to Polonius which I have just mentioned, and in his pacifist speech to Fortinbras and elsewhere, becomes so often the mouthpiece of Shakespeare himself; and to make a little more of that supremely important element in the situation, namely, Hamlet's chivalrous idealism of women. Did not the struggle start with his horror at his mother's re-marriage? His most bitter and cruel words are those which he uses to Ophelia, in whom he discovers a falling-off from his ideal of womanhood, so that he is led to break out, in just the same way as Lear broke out when he denounced as centaurs the daughters who had been paragons.

The description of the character of Hamlet is a powerful piece of analysis; and still more brilliant, because based upon more slender material, is that of the lesser characters. Throughout most of this invaluable work Mr. Granville-Barker carries us with him by the persuasiveness with which he corrects a too literary reading of Shakespeare, without ever forgetting that Shakespeare's drama, nevertheless, is literature.

FRENCH ARCHITECTURE

By R. A. Duncan

THREE HUNDRED YEARS OF FRENCH ARCHITECTURE, 1494-1794. By Sir Reginald Blomfield. *Alexander MacLehose*. 7s. 6d.

Upon the collapse of the Classical World at the fall of the Roman Empire the torch of learning and civilization was in due time transferred to the keeping of France. Fantastic though it may seem to modern realists, the medieval interlude in France was a complete social system with a high artistic achievement. In the middle of the fifteenth century the revival of Italy brought with it a revival of classical arts and classical learning.

What is so clearly shown in Sir Reginald Blomfield's book is that although France borrowed from the Italians the impulse and the material for a new expression in her architecture, she made it wholly her own. Even in the early experimental phases the buildings are vigorously national—there is nothing tentative about them. The adherence to tradition is deliberate, the deviations are equally so. The national characteristics are inherited from the greatness of France in the Middle Ages. No nation uncertain of itself could have given to a derivative architectural style such a national stamp as is clearly displayed in all their architecture from 1494 to 1794, and even down to our modern days of confusion.

This book is written for the English traveller, and his enjoyment of the discovery of France must surely be enhanced by this most readable yet scholarly discussion of her great architectural treasures of the Renaissance and the stories of the men whose creative powers have given us these buildings. The traveller for pleasure has two great joys that he seeks—the beauty of nature and the beauty of man's achievements in his progress towards civilization.

It is always surprising that so few people to-day realize that by their support of

contemporary art and by their insistence on a high standard of beauty in their own native place they would be creating not only pleasure in life but something of permanent value. To bring the argument to a more mundane plane, there is a capital and revenue value in good building and the city beautiful. The tourist traffic of France is worth many millions a year. If the great patrons and the great artists had not existed, this valuable national asset would never have existed either. Nobody would spend good money to see the Black Country, but rather to flee from thence to the banks of the Loire.

Knowledge is perhaps not essential to a simple enjoyment, but the more subtle and complex emotions are more readily awakened when all the factors are appreciated and when the trains of thought travel along many avenues. The architect has a great joy in life in that buildings talk to him of so many subjects; of science and art, of social history and men's desires. An architect in this book strives to give to others this self-same pleasure through his own very particular knowledge and understanding of this period of great architectural achievement.

Medieval architecture has a romantic appeal in its context and detail. Renaissance architecture, while it lacks this romance, is lively with the stories of individuals, the architects, and their patrons. The book is not dry with technical criticism of designs, but wisely this study of the architecture of humanism has been rendered vivid with human documents. More than half the page titles are the names of the great men of the period.

The description "architect" covered a wide range in those days. In some cases he was an artist craftsman, sometimes he was a designer-contractor, in others again a draughtsman purely and simply preparing schemes and details which builders

borrowed from his copy-books. Some were rather more like engineers, while with others their practice resembled that of surveyors. But what is always astonishing about the renaissance is that in spite of the comparatively rapid changes of fashion and the diversity of the architects and designers, the various executant craftsmen in all trades and crafts were able to keep pace with the changes and produce such completely harmonious results. It must be clearly understood that the architect of those days did not supply much in the way of detailed drawings to a large scale. Although the changes in the various phases were not violent, they were in fairly rapid sequence and resulted in definitely characteristic designs marking each stage of development. The executant craftsmen of to-day could certainly not be relied upon to follow such changes or produce such harmonious results without the most com-

plete dictatorship on the part of the architect.

What patrons these architects had! They might be capricious, but they were lavish. When the patronage of architecture ceased to be dispensed by the nerveless heads of the Church it was scattered in greater profusion by the autocratic monarchs and their satellite aristocracy. Blomfield says that Louis XIV paid Jules Mansart an annual salary of £12,000, and at one period the king was spending about £1,000,000 a year in building.

This brings the thought that perhaps the things that architecture lacks to-day are not only the patronage of the wealthy but the understanding and sympathetic enthusiasm that went with it. This vast expenditure was not merely wasteful extravagance, for it helped to create the greatness of France and a monument for all time.

THE SHELTERED MUSE

By Stephen Spender

BRIDGES: COLLECTED ESSAYS
XXVII, XXVIII, XXIX, XXX.

Oxford University Press. 5s.

If one accepts Keats' distinction between poetic personality, which has no static centre but is capable of identifying itself with any object in the universe; and character, which is a hardening of personality into certain fixed modes of behaviour; then one may go on to suggest that artificiality in writing is a vice of personality, affectation a vice of character.

For example, W. B. Yeats is often artificial but never affected: one is inclined to dismiss some of his more fantastical propositions, but in doing so one only rejects a mood into which his personality seems for the moment to have entered. Robert Bridges, on the other hand, is profoundly and continuously affected; the prejudice, sheer silliness, and stylistic pomposity which one encounters in his work are not a mood at all; they are part

of a system of "character," in the public school sense of the word, into which his genuine poetic personality has hardened.

Feeling he must really do his bit during the war—"a time for friends to forgather and sympathize"—Bridges goes down to Swindon to address the local branch of the Workers' Educational Association:

Let anyone ask himself where at any moment he would most wish to be: would it be in this lecture-room, or in a theatre or a museum or music-hall, or in a hot stuffy crowd in front of the "movies"? Would he not rather fancy himself stretcht at full length on some high down, with the fresh breeze rustling in the grasses, the larks singing overhead, and the white clouds of June sailing across the sky? Or perhaps on a river-bank, where the willows droop over the water-lilies—or in a wood at any season of the year, where among the noble trees all kinds of life and of beauty are busy in perpetual change and infinit variety?

It is not merely the improved spelling which makes this passage seem affected. The affectation really lies in the fact that

what Bridges is offering to these working men is not the countryside, but a literary landscape, a section of the paraphernalia of beauty, manliness and health which surrounded his own ego, in place of the "movies" which he so facetiously despises, but which are, after all, nearer their life than his Miltonic prose.

In the same essay we read that "*Cinema-films supply'd to us from Germany and America*" trifle with the emotions, which is "*the most soul-destroying habit that can be indulged,*" and that the "*average uneducated man likes to have his newspaper full of murders and divorce-cases and bad jokes, and loves to sit in front of a spectacle that pricks him with horror or tickles him to foolish laughter.*" It is surely remarkable that this man who so loved to read the Greek classics in his rock-garden should despise modern forms of entertainment for the very qualities of murder and bad jokes, horror and foolish laughter, which they have in common with Greek tragedy and comedy. One is left wondering what pleasure it was that Bridges got out of the classics unless it were the sense of "beauty" (surely only one aspect of art) and an assurance of his own intellectual superiority.

The reader of Hopkins's letters to Bridges will recall the remarkable passage in which Hopkins defends *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. The difference between Hopkins, the genuine artist who really understood the nature of human passions and deeply sympathized with them, and Bridges, the artist whose talent had crystallized into a static, though perhaps noble, character, could hardly be more clearly shown. Bridges imposes his "Greats" education on everything he sees; if the world does not fit into that pattern, then it is vulgar, and as for vulgarity—"that is our national blemish and sin."

Of course, Bridges was a considerable poet, and not even the stupendous machinery of his self-regard can prevent him saying interesting things and having profound intuitions. He is interesting in the essay on *The Nature of Poetry*, on the

unconscious mind, and even states something like a theory of the collective unconscious. Even here, though, he is speaking as a Platonist, and seems never to have heard of contemporary psychology. And after saying that art neither trims nor rationalizes spontaneous activity within the mind, he immediately starts doing a little trimming himself, because one of his favourite hobby-horses is the belief that there can be no such thing as *vers libre*; that is to say, there can only be variations on already existing poetic forms.

A great deal of our pleasur in beauty, whether natural or artistic, depends on slight variations of a definite form. Fancy if all roses wer as similar in shape as all equilateral triangles! The fundamental motiv of this pleasure may be described as a balance between the expected and the unexpected, etc.

We are soon switched back from the problems of the subconscious mind to the view of poetry as a branch of horticulture.

It is possible to be convinced that railways may subserve to human perfection; certainly they can be used for thatt purpos; but it is evident that they are very commonly the purveyors of man's wasteful and needless luxury, and that they have added greatly to the vain feverish turmoil, which is the worst foe to spiritual life.

This paragraph almost sums up Bridges's view of life—and of art as well. Railways are all right so long as they are used in moderation; but they aren't. The thought that the "vain feverish turmoil" of modern life may in some sense be an expression of modern man's spiritual state does not occur to him; all he feels is that railways in excess, and cinemas altogether, prevent men from sharing the view of life instilled into him by "Greats." Now Hopkins would probably have thought that if man's material environment is Hell, then Hell probably is the expression of his spiritual condition. A Communist would say, too, that material injustices must be removed and evils altered, in order that a classless society may come into its material and spiritual heritage. Bridges stands midway between these points of view; he sees

the material environment as completely divorced from the spiritual state of men. He is an individualist cut off from the life of his time, who has managed to patch together a philosophy of his own with which to withstand the real nature of the contemporary world. He sees everyone and everything in terms of his own healthy, beautiful, noble individuality;

wishes that everyone should be conditioned more or less as he is conditioned, loving the classics, hating cinemas, absorbed in beauty: so with perfect good faith he can tell young Swindon working men to live in hostels, run on a communal basis and modelled after Oxford colleges, and not go to the cinema, nor marry till they are thirty.

THE ANATOMY OF FANCY

By Richard Church

DANCE OF THE QUICK AND THE DEAD. By Sacheverell Sitwell. *Faber and Faber*. 15s.

This is a queer book to assess. Its structure, if it can be said to have a structure, is comparable to that of Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*. Like that earlier prose master, Mr. Sitwell has retired from the world to the study, deliberately amassing an academic experience of life, and regurgitating it in a long-winding fugue of prose upon which he lavishes the utmost engineering skill.

The result is a book for the leisurely reader rather than for the professional reviewer. It is a book full of surprises and delights, both in subject and treatment. Sometimes one is startled by a sudden wind of social or economic reality which lifts this prose incantation to a cry of bitterness and rage. Again, the poet-connoisseur emerges, with elaborate evocations of times past, esoteric rituals from the East, the familiar discursions on baroque art, interpretations of musical compositions, sympathetic portraits of composers, painters, clowns, characters.

I say that the prose is *lifted*; but that is not truly indicative of the movement of the book. The most characteristic quality of the prose in which all this oddly assorted knowledge and information is conveyed is its almost riparian level and flow. It reads as though the author were chanting aloud, in a catalogual emphasis, his endless string of instances of the nervous manifestation of life and beauty.

But the thing is not so simple as that. There are two authors: the dilettante-aesthete, preoccupied with Central European art, joys of the Tyrol, quaint fashions, the music of Schumann and Chopin and John Field, Khrisna and the milkmaids, and Asiatic religious gardens and other such properties of the Sitwellian *mise-en-scène*. The second author, his chant a little less even, with tone rising above and falling below the voice of the first, is one pace nearer life. He is indignant about ancient social wrongs, such as the tortures in Brueghel's *Triumph of Death*, or the refined cruelties of the prison system in the nineteenth century. He concerns himself with our modern vulgarity and racial suicide.

So this strange fugue runs on, the two incessant voices marvellously accorded, the social critic (bass) and the aesthete (baritone) passing the idea from one to the other, but never letting the subject drop or break off. Out of an historical fact, a record of dead abuses, emerges the evocative word, and the word itself is taken up, examined, and discoursed upon, the ex-foliation always producing some theme, like a fragrant petal for the one cantor, or a hideous worm for the other cantor.

Such a method must inevitably result in leisureliness, and a demand for like leisureliness in the reader. The book is one to keep for easy reading, without thrill or excitement, but with the fancy always stimulated, and one's pleasure in words always agreeably fed.

MR. WELLS'S THRILLER

By V. E. Brooks

THE CROQUET PLAYER. By H. G. Wells. *Chatto and Windus*. 3s. 6d.

Mr. Wells's thriller is so splendidly vital and unerring in its aim as a thriller that it hardly needed its symbolic lining to assure its success. If his sub-normal croquet player had filled no other part than that of a reluctant spectator of a village drama, the miasmic fenland that he evokes is so chill and sinister in its perceptive, its emanations are so covertly evil, the rustic descendants of Neanderthal man are so unconsciously but inevitably predestined for disaster, that the story of the diabolically haunted marshland would have been complete in itself. But Mr. Wells has chosen to charge his unheroic hero with a representative significance. He is the man in the street, on the land, in the marsh, in every corner of the British Empire (in other corners of the world, no doubt, but, rightly or wrongly, we can only visualize these Wellsian croquet players in the mass as British), who does not want to be *drawn into* disturbing events and dangerous emergencies, still less into disturbing and dangerous ideas. It is not so much that he is devoid of imagination as that he deliberately safeguards himself from bold and imaginative thinking, lest he be swept away himself from his fragile moorings by the force of ideas that one rash movement on his part might let loose.

Mr. Wells could hardly have introduced his amiable winner of croquet matches and archery tassels at a more historically appropriate time.

So he takes refuge from any contacts that might menace his peace of mind in the mild routine of duty and pleasure that should safeguard and enclose the adopted nephew of a rich and unexacting aunt. He sees himself well enough to know that he is a bit of a "sissy," as they say, and this consciousness of his limitations governs his taste for safety first. But even the expression safety first

acknowledges the immediate existence of danger. When nephew and aunt go abroad to recuperate from the ardours of croquet, there—in the Normandy sunlight—danger, in the person of Dr. Finchatton, recuperating from a nervous breakdown, immediately is. He has had strange and sinister experiences in a remote practice in the English Fenlands, and it is these experiences, suggesting a survival of the bestial instincts of Neanderthal man, that the unwilling croquet player is compelled to hear him relate.

And if in the East Anglian Fenlands, why not in Spain, Abyssinia, Belfast, and Liverpool? All over the world men are "breaking the frame of the present." The cave-man, who has never been destroyed, but has only been kept at a distance, is rushing back, through the doors that we have opened into the past, with overwhelming force.

"Face the facts!" roars the "intolerable psychiatrist," Dr. Norbert (who has Dr. Finchatton under his care). "The time when men could be put in blinkers to save them from seeing too much is past. Past for ever! There can be no more religions of reassurance. No churches of 'There—there!'"

The poor croquet player, who has an appointment to play with his aunt at half-past twelve, rises from his table on the terrace with calmness and dignity. But the good work, perhaps, has begun. As he retreats to his hotel, Mr. Wells, without becoming unreasonably optimistic, leads us to hope that he may lose a hoop or two to his aunt, and not sleep quite as well as before he left England. Without quite agreeing with the Wellsian view that religion was reassuring in its various Hell-fire versions, we can agree that no soothing "All clear!" is likely, for some little time, to fall upon our anxious ears. But if the croquet players are beginning to hear the clash of the past with the present, too, the unpleasantness may be worth it.

A SURREALIST MANIFESTO

By S. N. Hampshire

SURREALISM. Edited by Herbert Read.

Faber and Faber. 12s. 6d.

One of Lawrence's favourite epithets of abuse applies to the surrealist movement above all others: it is very much a "would-be" movement; its manifestoes are more entertaining than its works: one is more impressed by its principles than its practice. Among its practising adherents, Dali, Chirico, and Klee are the only painters of distinction: for Picasso can hardly be claimed by this—or, indeed, any other—movement: it possesses only one respectable poet—Paul Éluard. One might therefore be tempted to dismiss the surrealist as an *épateur*. But that this would be a mistake the brilliant essay by Mr. Hugh Sykes Davies in this book is alone sufficient proof. For surrealism at its best is an aesthetic theory or critical attitude; it calls attention to a commonly neglected constituent of romantic art; it declares war on both the two traditional rivals—naturalism and formalism: it rightly insists that the effectiveness—for, strictly, one ought not to use the word "beauty"—of a poem or picture is not reducible either to its expressiveness or to its perfection of form. Historically, the movement originated as a reaction against a petrifying aestheticism and called for a new emphasis on content: hence the unashamed ugliness of most of the many excellently produced illustrations in this book.

One expects, therefore, from the five essays in this book, first, a statement of what precisely this neglected constituent of romantic art is and a defence of its exaggeration to the exclusion of all sensuous beauty; secondly, historical illustrations. Mr. Sykes Davies at least supplies the latter in abundance. His quotations trace the development of the concept of imagination from Bacon to André Breton; as one might expect, Coleridge affords him the most useful material; an effective

comparison of the observations of Dali and Coleridge on the creative process shows that they only differed in that the former considers sub-rational what the latter considered super-rational. He seeks illustrations even in Wordsworth, not without success.

Mr. Herbert Read's argument is vitiated by two errors, one historical, the other philosophical: he proceeds, briefly, thus—the distinction between classicism and romanticism is equivalent to the distinction between bad and good art, and to the distinction between reaction and revolution: he then identifies surrealism and romanticism and draws the conclusion that all good art is both surrealist and revolutionary. But all romantic movements have not been politically revolutionary or even progressive: the German romantic movement was avowedly counter-revolutionary, the romantic movement in France began with a glorification of the Papacy and the Restoration: the literary Boulangistes, anti-Dreyfusards and members of *l'Action Française* were undeniably romantic writers: D'Annunzio must be classified as a romantic: Coleridge was an ideological reactionary.

The second error—closely related to the first—is the horrible fusion of Marxist and Freudian language: the two philosophies are not only not complementary but are irreconcilably incompatible—as most official Marxists have insisted. Marxism, being materialistic and proclaiming the religion of physical science, claims to be the heir to the tradition of the enlightenment: it excludes introversion and the cultivation of private worlds: within its premises surrealism can only be characterised as escapism, mysticism, superstition—and by all the other traditional epithets of abuse. Marx's favourite authors, appropriately, were Diderot and Balzac.

The contributions of Paul Éluard and Georges Hugnet are of less general interest.

They trace the growth of the surrealist state of mind from Sade, Rimbaud, and Lautréamont and include what amounts to an anthology of French surrealist verse, most of which will seem, to the majority of English readers, to exceed the permissible limit of incomprehensibility.

Still, there is much that is agreeable: for instance, a poem that begins

La terre est bleue comme un caraque . . .

The book contains ninety-six good illustrations, is excellently printed and is in all respects a triumph of publishing.

THE RHYTHM OF WORSHIP

By the Rev. Sir Edwyn Hoskyns

WORSHIP. By Evelyn Underhill. *Nisbet*. 10s. 6d.

If adoration be the first or central act of religion, a serious and sustained exposition of the form and meaning of Christian worship ought to lay bare the very nature of the Christian religion. Miss Evelyn Underhill is eminently competent to make this contribution to our understanding, not merely because she possesses adequate technical equipment and a delicate sensitiveness to the breadth and variety of her subject, but especially because her competence and sympathy are exercised within the action of the believing and worshipping church. Books on the philosophy of religion are fairly accessible to the cultured Englishman; technical books on liturgiology are not hard for the scholar to come by; nor is it at all difficult for the pietist to procure books of devotion. But it is by no means easy to find a theological guide for whom Christian worship is the door by which "humanity enters into that great life of the spiritual universe which consists in the ceaseless proclamation of the glory of God," and for whom, therefore, Christian worship is both creative and redemptive, since by it men are led out of their inveterate self-occupation to a knowledge of God and to union with Him. In this book, however, Miss Underhill shows herself to be such a guide, such a theologian.

Her book is divided into two parts. In the first she calls attention to the rhythm of worship and defines its fundamental

elements or character. The rhythm of ritual, symbol, sacrament, and sacrifice appears at every level of human development, for it belongs to the innermost structure of human experience. This rhythm of experience must be taken seriously, for it is the means by which men, half-animal and half-spiritual, are capable, while living under conditions of space and time, of expressing the conscious worship of that Reality which transcends both space and time. And so the varied elements of worship make up the human response to "besetting Spirit."

Having thus based the understanding of worship on these fundamentals of human experience, Miss Underhill is able to proceed to her exposition of Christian worship in which the rhythm of worship is both preserved and clarified, and to proceed in such a manner as to avoid making nonsense of those crudities that remain even when the devotion of worship is most Christian: "No ritual pattern can be understood by us until we have penetrated below its surface and observed the spiritual realities which it embodies and seeks to express." The whole of the first part of the book is concerned with the unseen realities of which the Christian liturgies are the ceremonial garments. In spite of her tender handling of the rough things in popular devotion, Miss Underhill is, of course, acutely aware of the danger of materialism in worship. Nevertheless, she reminds her readers that even where Christian worship may seem deformed and

unworthy or extravagant, some are thereby caught up into the "current of sacrificial love" which is the essence of the life of the Church.

In the second part of her book, Miss Underhill, after calling attention to the Jewish background of the New Testament and to the beginnings of Christian worship, summarizes its characteristics as they are exemplified in Eastern Orthodoxy, in Western Catholicism, in the Reformed and Free Churches, in the Society of Friends, and in the Anglican tradition.

Miss Underhill has undoubtedly written a most valuable exposition of Christian

worship as an important witness to the Reality that lies beyond human experience and to the glory of God. And yet her book moves, it may be, too smoothly; for the Biblical voice of prophecy, even the scriptural tones of the liturgy itself, are almost hushed in a Holy Mystery in which the religious aspirations of mankind are fulfilled. But there is a restlessness that remains even in the mystery of Christian worship, a restlessness that refuses to affirm the final importance of worship except in a setting that marks its contingency. And so the voice of prophecy and the framework of eschatology remain characteristic in the worship of the Church.

THE EGOIST

By Marie Scott-James

SALAVIN. By Georges Duhamel. *Dent*. 8s. 6d.

The four novels which comprise M. Duhamel's famous Salavin cycle have been translated for the first time into English, and are here published together in one volume. Salavin, we have variously been told, is the "little man," the Don Quixote, the Divine Fool of French letters. These interpretations are extremely misleading, as the author, no doubt, would be the first to agree. Far from being a universal or representative figure, Salavin is a man conditioned by a disease peculiar to himself, intensely neurotic, depressingly egotistical, whose morbid absorption in his own spiritual state leads him to the extraordinary decision to become a saint.

In the first book, *Confessions at Midnight*, a most brilliant analysis of the moral and physical deterioration which unemployment induces in a man of uncreatively artistic temperament, Salavin, already nearly thirty, is dismissed from his job because he yields to an overwhelming impulse to touch his employer's hairy ear. His wanderings about the streets of Paris, his meetings with the poor and derelict,

his nervous habits, his half-hearted search for work, his gradual lapse into sloth, are described with horrible and convincing realism. At this time he is in a Slavic mood of alternating despondency and joy which ends in an uprush of self-loathing in which he flies from his home, his mother and his fiancée, and pours out his story to a stranger in a café.

The *Confessions* have an integrity which is never again completely achieved. In *Salavin's Journal* the hero, now forty, as persistently Wertherist as ever, reaches the resolution to become a saint. We read the diary, too ludicrous to be pathetic, of a man so bent upon his own perfection that he makes everyone near him miserable. He leaves his wife, Marguerite (in her M. Duhamel portrays with extraordinary skill that peasant goodness peculiar to France—patient, resigned, long-suffering, a little lethargic), that he may pursue saintliness through chastity; in an attempt at mortification of the flesh he catches pneumonia through leaving off warm clothes. It would be an admirable portrait of a simple and misguided soul if it were not that M. Duhamel allows his own irony to inform Salavin's confessions.

For the rest of the volume, the author describes his hero's adventures in the third person. Salavin begins to attend the meetings of a revolutionary club and seeks spiritual regeneration in Left Wing politics. The personalities of the comrades are exhibited with great skill. Caesar Devrigny, the robust, genial, indiscreet business man who dabbles in politics, is M. Duhamel's most vital creation. When he first bursts into the book calling "Max, come out to Rouen to lunch; the car's at the door," it is as though the fetid atmosphere of introspection were cleared away by a bracing wind. Here is the extrovert, the man of pleasure, a vulgarian with the gay lasciviousness and rich colouring of a portrait by Renoir.

Finally, Salavin, still tortured by his failure to achieve sainthood, goes to Tunis to seek it through the performance of heroic deeds. In the intervals of running a gramophone shop—whose business he characteristically neglects—he works in the native hospital, isolates himself with cases of mortal and infectious disease, and tries to redeem his rascally native servant, by whom he is ultimately shot. At this period Salavin is inspiring—and one feels it incredible—an extraordinary devotion

in his friends. It is true that he has taught himself to display physical courage, but he is more obsessed than ever with the subject of his own salvation. He dies, admitting his failure, in the arms of the devoted and deserted Marguerite.

The question which remains unresolved is: How far is the author aware of Salavin's egotism and futility? More often than not he seems to see in Salavin a genuinely tragic figure, a man with an unrealized capacity for noble action. Indeed, one feels that M. Duhamel's romantic attitude would not permit him intentionally to write four novels about a pathological case. Yet Salavin as presented is a pathological case. When one thinks of the real saints of literature—Proust's grandmother, Flaubert's Félicité, Dostoevski's Myshkin, Gissing's Mr. Bird—or in history, of the practical, organizing saints of the type of St. Paul, one sees in all of them a tremendous impulse outwards, a passionate devotion to humanity or an idea. Salavin has not even the germs of sainthood. From first to last his preoccupation was with his own spiritual condition, and for that reason he is a hero who can inspire pity but never respect or love.

MINOR POETS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

By Hugh F.A. Fausset

RARE POEMS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. Chosen and edited by L. Birkett Marshall. *Cambridge University Press*. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Marshall has selected these poems, about two hundred in number, from the numerous verses which he has met with while wandering along the very unfrequented by-paths of the seventeenth century. Most of them have come from rare volumes of poetry never reprinted after their first issue, a few from MSS. which have been overlooked by collectors. They have been chosen for poetic merit and not merely for some obscure interest, and the merit claimed is that of distinctive

minor poetry. A few details concerning the life and writings of each poet are given, and these confirm the minor note. "Most of Farley's work," we read, for example, "is mild and pleasant," Dancer's poems "are light, competent lyrics of inconstancy, farewells, resolutions, and persuasions to love," and there is "an occasional poem of merit" in the "four volumes of sorry verses" which Elys published. It is difficult for a researcher amid minor poets to retain an exacting enough standard of value. A poem of no more than graceful emptiness may seem to shine like a jewel amid wastes of sorry verse. And it must be confessed that there

is a good deal of such gracefully trivial or conventionally moral verse in this collection. The period it covers lay in the backwash of the Elizabethan wave. Its greater poets, whether Milton or Crashaw or Vaughan or Cowley, made up in mental or mystical intensity for any slackening of instinctive force. But its minor poets tended to echo Cowley's "wish" for quiet or Marvell's appreciation of it without the virile intelligence of the one or the passionate artistry of the other. Of this tame mood of retreat Watkyns's *The Wish* is a characteristic example:

A little house, a quiet wife,
Sufficient food to nourish life,
Most perfect health, and free from harm,
Convenient clothes to keepe me warm.
The liberty of foot, and mind,
And grace the ways of God to find.
This is the summe of my desire,
Until I come unto heaven's quire.

The "humble, calm, and innocent estate" of a country life may, of course, be richly productive of poetry, nor is an ideal of temperance opposed to it. But in many of these poets such virtues made for dullness because the motive was self-regarding. And so their love-protesting, however pretty, rings hollow and is often, as in Coppinger's verses, decoratively trite, although here and there a note of real feeling breaks through the tinkle of artificial compliment or complaint.

While, however, the love poems are mostly fading echoes of songs that once were fresh, the religious note, when it occurs, is something new and growing. Many of these poets were in Orders, or, if not, were deeply concerned with their soul's welfare. Their religious preoccupation is more moral than mystical, but it can be devoutly sincere in verses, for example, by Collop, Cudmore, Elys, Howell, and Knevet. Yet it is neither in these nor in the literary wits nor the pastoralists that the most convincing evidence of poetic power is to be found, but in the poems of two writers of whom little is known. The first is Thomas

Beedome, who is supposed to have died about 1640, and who was the author of a single posthumous volume of verse, *Poems Divine and Humane*. The second is the Restoration poetess who wrote under the name "Ephelia" a book entitled *Female Poems on Several Occasions*. Her identity has never been discovered, but all her verses bear the clear impress of it, as do Beedome's of his. There is a necessity in their poems, and particularly in Beedome's impassioned utterance which links the earlier poet with Donne and the later with Dryden, and which emphasizes by contrast the nerveless quality of much of the verse in the volume, despite the many minor felicities of form and feeling to be found in it.

BEAUTY VANISHING

THE OLD TOWNS OF ENGLAND.

By Clive Rouse. *Batsford*. 7s. 6d.

ENGLISH VILLAGE HOMES. By

Sydney R. Jones. *Batsford*. 7s. 6d.

Amid the clamour of appeals for the salvation of our countryside there is grave danger that we may overlook the deplorable wreckage of beauty and tradition in our old towns. Mr. Clive Rouse's book, being both a record and a warning, is a timely and useful piece of work. Growth and change should not, in themselves, spoil our towns, and they did not always spoil them in other days. There need not be inevitable lamentation because a serene Queen Anne façade was put on a Tudor house, or even because a Regency shop-window later on was set into that; but outrage does occur when the whole building is swept away to make a car-park or to build a multiple store from a stock pattern.

To spread knowledge of imperilled beauty is better propaganda for the preservation of national amenities than exhibitions of encroaching horrors, which make the beholders feel that all is lost save builders' profits, and Mr. Rouse, writing without gush and using new photographs profusely as illustrations,

makes an insidious and memorable claim for greater respect to be shown to our fascinating civic growths, some of them with a thousand years of continuous life behind them.

The diversity of the old towns is a striking feature of this record. There seems to be no typical English town, though foreigners probably have one clear enough in their mind's eyes. It cannot be a hill-town like surprising Shaftesbury, or a stone town like Chipping Norton, or a brick town like Farnham or Guildford, or a pure flowering of eighteenth-century taste like Bath or old Brighton, or even a palimpsest like Steyning, a town King Alfred knew.

London is deliberately left out of this survey as being too vast, and Oxford and Cambridge are merely mentioned on the grounds that their art and architecture are so much apart from anything the usual English town has to show. Mr. Rouse is no mere collector of the urban parallel of the "beauty spot," but he does not mar his book by undue fear of the obvious and well known.

The beauty of the cottage homes of England is no new discovery, and has not lacked celebration in art and literature during the past hundred years. Too often, however, it has been taken for granted as a merely accidental affair—almost as a patina due to age—and this fallacy has been the excuse for much shoddy and ungracious work in our own time. In his comprehensive survey, *English Village Homes*, Mr. Jones rejects the theory of accident, and provides a good argument in architectural diagrams of two villages famed for their picturesqueness. Even from these bald outlines it can be seen how intelligent and "functional" is their planning and how certainly it must have been the work of men, however unlettered or obscure, of remarkable ability. After this clearing of the ground Mr. Rouse surveys the village scene from Cornwall to Yorkshire, from Kent to Cumberland, not merely describing things as they are, but

explaining how their character was decided by local conditions. The average reader, however, will have to turn over the twelve score photographs several times, rejoicing in Devon cob and Hampshire thatch, in Kent tiling and Suffolk pargeting, in silvery Sussex oak and sturdy Yorkshire stone, before being able to settle down to the text.

EDITH SHACKLETON

PROFITS OF WAR

THE PRIVATE MANUFACTURE OF ARMAMENTS. Vol. I. By Philip Noel-Baker, M.P. With a Prefatory Note by Viscount Cecil. *Gollancz*. 18s.

We are used, by now, to reading of merchants of death, a secret and bloody international, welded together into Patriotism Ltd., and we have been intrigued by the picturesque antics of Mr. Beverley Nichols when he cried havoc with pacifist thought. From the emotionalism of previous appeals we can now turn with gratitude to this calm analysis of the facts. The sober title of the book symbolizes its aim. It appeals only to reason. It builds fact upon fact, quotation upon quotation, in a cautious crescendo of conviction. A comprehensive and reliable work of such a nature is vitally necessary.

The problem of private profit from armaments has, as Mr. Noel-Baker sees it, two aspects. There are the evil moral and political effects of the system and there is the more economic and technical aspect, the importance of private manufacture for national defence, the supposed advantages of which outweigh, for many, its political disadvantages. The volume now published deals with the former aspect; the second volume, expected early next year, deals with the latter. So final judgment must be suspended, for it is upon a balance of the two aspects that decision must, in fact, depend.

The problem is particularly apt to be coloured by political prejudices. The pacifist regards it as anyhow a dirty business, but likely to be less pernicious

in its effects if directly State-controlled. The Communist is apt to exaggerate the sinister motives of the capitalist-manufacturer; and this the author is careful to avoid. "This book is not an attack on individuals or on a class; it is an argument about a system." Ultimately, governments are responsible for the evils of the system, which has had their positive encouragement. The Socialist is convinced that so long as the borderline between politics and private business remains vague, it will be shady indeed: and therefore he seeks to clarify it by nationalizing such industries as impinge directly upon politics. The Conservative seems to regard the abolition of even this form of private enterprise as the not very thin end of a wedge. It is a pity that it is made a party issue. For whether an armament-ring be regarded as a magic circle of patriots or a vicious circle of death, it is certainly a closed circle—closed to the claims of morality, public or private, so long as it remains in private hands. As one commercial traveller in arms wrote, "We are certainly in one hell of a business, where a fellow has to wish for trouble so as to make a living. . . ."

The book is partly a protest against regarding the manufacture of arms as a purely commercial concern, like any other business; partly an examination of the historical process whereby this attitude, interwoven with many other factors, acts as a solvent of peace, whether during the Mulliner panic of 1906-9 (which reads like a penny dreadful) or during the Chaco, Manchurian, and Abyssinian disputes since the war. The fundamental need of salesmen of arms is to "sow apprehension," to create conditions in which "sales-resistance" is less. Particularly interesting is the examination of how this influence works—through the transfer of retired politicians, officers, and civil servants to armaments firms, through the press, "patriotic" societies, popular panics, and by playing off one nation against another. One is left wondering how much of the present apprehension in Europe

has been "sown." The book is terrifyingly topical; and one looks forward eagerly to the completion of this valuable work.

DAVID THOMSON

THE DIAGNOSTICIAN

THE OLIVE TREE. By Aldous Huxley.

Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.

A never-dimmed realization of the dependence of effect upon cause does more than contribute to the peculiar flavour of all Mr. Huxley's work. The essayist, no less than the novelist, is too intent upon his logic to award praise or blame or even for fault-finding. But it would be the stupidest possible mistake to suppose that he refrains from censure because he is pleased with what he sees about him. If he spares the rod, it is not to spoil the child, but in order to place the little wretch unblemished on the dissecting table.

There are sixteen essays in the new volume. Besides varying considerably in length, they fail in other respects to establish the unity of *Music at Night* and the majority of their predecessors. Nevertheless they, like all the rest, reveal the author's patient determination to pursue each idea to its conclusion. Even the briefest of the essays are wonderfully complete within their limits. In the case of five of them these limits (600 to 700 words) suggest an ephemeral place of origin; yet the author never appears pressed for either space or matter, and some of these short papers are amongst the best in the book. Of the others, the most important are one dealing with T. H. Huxley as a literary man and the Introduction, already well known, to the letters of D. H. Lawrence; the most delightful the affectionate tribute to the grey, ungainly, dusty little tree which lends its name to the volume.

It is likely that the pleasure given by the essays of certain novelists is partly dependent upon the spell first cast by the novels and now exchanged for some-

thing more intimate and perilous—the sort of flattered, flustering thrill we should experience on being received into his own home by a public character admired but hitherto unseen. In the case of Mr. Huxley this gratifying but anxious moment does not await us. One might not deduce the novelist from the essays, one cannot fail to find the essayist in the novels. They are full of short essays; and so the insatiable mind of the essayist is already familiar to any reader of any book by this author—even of the too seldom considered poems.

ARNOLD PALMER

LETTERS OF GLADSTONE TO HIS WIFE

GLADSTONE TO HIS WIFE. Edited by Tilney Bassett. *Methuen*. 15s.

"Gladstone, when away from home, not only never missed a day's post, but on occasions when events were moving rapidly wrote twice or even three times in the twenty-four hours to his wife Catherine." These words are quoted from Mr. Tilney Bassett's introduction to his volume of extracts from some thousands of these letters. His book begins with a number of Gladstone's earlier letters to his father and other members of his family. The whole period spanned by the volume before us exceeds seventy years. It ends in modern times, within the memories of men and women who are still young. But it begins with a very different England, almost as spacious as in the days of Queen Elizabeth and almost as undemocratic as in the days of Queen Anne.

This book helps us to see Gladstone more clearly. Though the letters were not written for publication or intended to display their author to the public gaze, they throw much light upon the origins of his greatness. They reveal, in the first place, the steadiness of purpose which he owed to his deep religious conviction. Thus his followers knew, broadly speaking, what to expect from him, and he did not

disappoint them. When they sent him back to Parliament and to office, there was no fear that he would run away from his election pledges or change his policy in order to please influential members of his Cabinet, to conciliate big financial interests, or even to follow some supposed change in public opinion. Like the Nazis in Germany to-day, his followers treasured in their homes (and, what is more, they read) the guide book of their leader's life. But that book was not *Mein Kampf*. It was the Bible.

Again, the letters show us Gladstone as an original and constructive thinker. It was this quality that distinguished him from so many politicians who lack stability because they try "to sit on the fence while keeping an ear to the ground." His leadership was assured.

Another quality displayed by these letters is Gladstone's amazing capacity for, and apparent delight in, hard work, hard thinking. This habit had already begun when as an undergraduate member of an Oxford reading party he wrote to his father that he was working more than ten hours a day.

This brief record of an important book must find room for one more of Gladstone's qualities: his sympathy for the under-dog, as shown, for example, by his famous pamphlet on the Bulgarian atrocities. His England shared that feeling. And to-day? One wonders what he would have thought of those organs of British public opinion which championed Japan against China and Italy against Abyssinia.

Mr. Tilney Bassett's volume leaves us guessing at Gladstone's motives in writing all these letters. Was it merely that his wife's interest in him and in his work might ever increase? Was it to aid his memory that he made these orderly records of his thoughts and actions? Was it partly perhaps for the same reason that the Catholic devotee confesses to the priest, that the Oxford-grouper "shares" with his group, or that the well-to-do neurotic consults the psycho-analyst?

MAXWELL GARNETT

TWO NOVELS

By Austin Clarke

WINDLESS SKY. By Fritz Faulkner.
Hogarth Press. 7s. 6d.

Nature insists on opposites, and, if we can judge from this remarkable first novel, Mr. Fritz Faulkner may indeed prove to be the correct antidote to Mr. William Faulkner. Instead of the atrocious glare of the present, the blare and nervous energy, here is a past so quietly evoked that we absorb rather than resist its influence. The modern technique employed by Mr. Faulkner has been used by others. But there is novelty and, no doubt, deliberation in the fact that he has applied it to the mid-West of the sixties, for both period and place have been long possessed by the saga school. Here is a dim world, scantily lit by oil lamps and candles. In detached glimpses Mr. Faulkner gradually evokes for us the communal life of a small German colony in which the old patriarchal customs are decaying. Scandal and cruelty can be found, but they are reduced to the whisperings or the instinctive silence of a small place. The sophisticated approach and the deliberate, definitive style, though apparently exotic, convey in a curious way a sense of a European past. Here is an example of Mr. Faulkner's neatness:

He could even play on the piano—he had one unlike any the boy Karl had ever seen, a tiny spindling instrument which gave out a tinkling metallic intonation; he played wandering vague interwoven melodies of a delightfully precise nature, which began and moved quaintly to the right, to the left; which skipped once, thrice; which took up again their prim tuneful circumlocutions. This music was the single thing practised by Mr. Wittbold which might be termed godless.

At times Mr. Faulkner lapses into those horrible falsities which are so often the penalties of carefulness. But they are rare in this unusual American experiment.

TOGETHER AND APART. By Margaret Kennedy. *Cassell.* 7s. 6d.

This is the age of the problem novel, and characters who have problems to solve are rarely vital enough to overpower the novelist. But the logical pattern of cause and effect which is necessary to the problem novel can in itself be a tyranny. It is permissible to suspect that Miss Margaret Kennedy really chose in her own mind a deeply emotional subject, then found that the main theme involved problems which proved equally interesting. The chord is sounded in the preliminary quotation:

And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain. . . .

But there is more method than madness in the story itself. We begin with an extremely interesting twentieth-century letter from Betsy Canning to her mother, in which Betsy gives her reasons for wishing to divorce her husband. Alec had been in the Civil Service, but left it to become a successful librettist with a host of theatrical friends. He had been casually unfaithful to his wife, but had no great desire for divorce. Betsy, on the other hand, felt out of place in these new circumstances, and decided, in a doctrinaire way, that it would be better for both to part. Mothers-in-law rushed in to stop the affair, and only made matters worse. Gossip increased, and an apparently sensible arrangement became an exhibition of spite and cross-purposes. Fundamental emotions underlie this unfortunate muddle of lives, but we have to imagine for ourselves the happy years when Alec Canning came home faithfully every evening from the office.

The best part of this story is that which deals with the effect of the divorce on the three Canning children. Here Miss Kennedy writes with great sympathy and understanding, which help us to forgive several false notes in her main theme.

OTHER BOOKS: SELECTED LIST

The books in this list, in addition to those which have been reviewed in the preceding pages, have been chosen after careful scrutiny from a much larger number of current publications.

ART

CONVERSATION PIECES. By Sacheverell Sitwell. With Notes on the Illustrations by Michael Sevier. *Batsford*. 21s.

Mr. Sitwell confines his conversation pictures to England, but by leading off with a "nine-footer" Copley and including drawings, a silhouette, photographs, and even costume-prints, he so stretches the term that the exclusion of Reynolds, Romney, and the mature Gainsborough in any form calls for explanation. Apparently the criterion employed is the presence of more than one figure and the absence of any other quality or interest than that of "period," preferably eighteenth-century flavour. For such an assemblage Mr. Sitwell provides an appropriately desultory and repetitive, somewhat Devis-like, commentary. The plates are indifferent. Mr. Sevier's notes on them give the dimensions of the pictures and short statements of the personages reputed to be represented, but do not attempt to get behind the owners', sometimes very disputable, attributions.

ART AND LIFE. By Hannah Priebisch Closs. *Oxford University Press*. 15s.

Mrs. Closs writes much good sense upon the meaninglessness of wide generalizations and sharp classifications in art, and the impossibility of a divorce between art and other aspects of life. She shows, with examples drawn from all European art (reproduced in plates at the end) the variety of approach and of means of expression in different countries and ages. Her sense is better than her manner, which inclines to the nebulous terms and the jargon beloved of those against whose generalizations her argument is aimed.

ESSAYS IN THE HISTORY OF THE YORK SCHOOL OF GLASS-PAINTING.

By John A. Knowles. *S.P.C.K.* 30s.
Although this large and well-illustrated book deals with a subject in its nature narrowly specialized and circumscribed, it is pleasant reading even to the general reader. Mr. Knowles makes no undue claims for his subject; his humorous appreciation of the

tricks, economics, and plagiarisms practised generally in glass-painting, his recognition of the provinciality of the York School, and his gentle debunking of the romantic glorification of the Middle Ages, are most refreshing. Instead of exaggerating its importance, he does his subject the honour of close study, and by means of learning wide and minute, scholarly and technical, combined with a very human historical imagination, gives from his own view-point a lively picture of some six centuries of English provincial town-life.

FICTION

SONG ON YOUR BUGLES. By Eric Knight. *Boriswood*. 7s. 6d.

Left-wing tendencies are implicit but never overstated in this forcible and moving story of a young Yorkshire millhand during a period of futile strikes, and the ensuing hardships. The detail, and the sympathetic yet honest representation of working-class life, is admirable; Mr. Knight handles less surely the central problem—that of the proletarian artist who is torn between his personal ambition to escape from his *milieu* and to become a successful painter and the choice of conscience: either to express the plight of his fellows in his art, or to work for them practically; his hero (all too humanly) veers in his attitude, and eventually meets his death in attempting to quell a vindictive demonstration.

SWAMP SHADOW. By Katherine Hamill. *Secker and Warburg*. 7s. 6d.

In the economical, laconic, and semi-tough manner that one has grown to expect from America, this new writer cleverly describes the life of a family-group on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. These people are poor and semi-civilized; most of them are debilitated by swamp fever; they are selfish, and often sly. Miss Hamill does not judge them, but reveals them with a cool objectivity, the goodness and charm of Rachel, whose love-story is related, providing relief to a somewhat grey study of human nature in the raw.

CO-OP: A Novel of Living Together.

By Upton Sinclair. *Werner Laurie*. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Upton Sinclair's immense novels, when they lack sensational revelations, can be very dull despite the integrity of his motives. But this huge practical schedule for a Utopian system of co-operation is so exciting in its human interest that even the sub-theme of love is negligible. A group of American unemployed of every profession, trade and art pool their industry and skill in a system of exchange and barter. It may be all a fairy tale, but in these dark days a devoted belief in the essential goodness of human nature stirs the heart.

A PUZZLE FOR FOOLS. By Patrick

Quentin. *Gollancz*. 7s. 6d.

It is hardly fair to set a mystery novel within the four walls of an asylum, since the mere existence and routine of such an institution is an uneasy story in itself. Mr. Quentin's asylum, it is true, is a discreetly-named "sanatorium" for borderland cases, and not officially a place of detention for lunatics; but as the distinguished producer from New York who has drunk himself into this strange company confesses: "It was just an expensive nuthouse for people like me." With borderline cases, and doctors and nurses as the suspects and victims of his drama, the author has, in a sense, too much of his work done for him; but the cunning, and the incalculable moves of madness, are suggested with outstanding skill.

DUET IN DISCORD. By Elizabeth Garner.

Arthur Barker. 7s. 6d.

Those who remember *An Englishwoman's Love Letters* may read with amusement this modern counterpart. In these imaginary confessions, expressed in epistolary form, a modern Englishwoman of forty-three tries to discover why she has been unable to hold her undersexed lover, who is aged twenty-six. Here, in fact, is the perfect *reductio ad absurdum* of the modern sex novel.

TWO EXILES. By Julian Hall. *Secker*. 7s. 6d.

A novel about the English stage written in a rather cinematographic technique. The two exiles are a Russian producer and a German (non-Aryan) actress; her experiences in contact with English members of her profession have an air of truth which cannot be ascribed solely to her resemblance to a certain popular and alien stage star.

GIANT'S STRIDE. By Brian Penton. *Cassell*.

8s. 6d.

This Australian saga, which began with *Landtakers*, is worth attention, and the present volume brings us to the middle eighties. Self-made man, sheep farmer, gold miner and furious speculator, Cabell endeavours to consolidate his family, but the shadows of transportation have not been exorcized. Mr. Penton works in the satisfying medium of oral tradition and so avoids the mere giantism which we find in the literary saga of to-day.

FROG IN THE REEDS. By Kit Marshall.

Nelson. 7s. 6d.

Bridget Black may be too good to be true, but she makes an excellent heroine and romantic excuse for Mr. Kit Marshall's new story of Zulu life. Thanks to her native nurse, the young tom-boy becomes a notability among the Zulus. The daughter of a trader, she determined to wage war on the white system and make the Zulu people once more self-sufficient, thereby stirring up intense rivalries. Mr. Marshall's intimate knowledge of Zulu tribes and customs gives authenticity to his descriptive details. But in order to find a suitable hero, Mr. Marshall has to bring his wild but practical heroine on a brief visit to London.

HISTORY & BIOGRAPHY

MEMORIES OF JOHN GALSWORTHY.

By his sister. *Robert Hale*. 5s.

Mrs. Reynolds does not attempt to tell us much about the writing of the novels or the methods of the novelist. But she gives a simple and effective picture of his upbringing and family life—influences, in Galsworthy's case, so strong that some knowledge of them is required for a proper appreciation of his work. Her own contribution occupies only fifty pages. The rest of the book is filled with characteristic letters from the author, and many excellent photographs.

LORD HALIFAX. Vol. II. By I. C. Lockhart.

Geoffrey Bles. 12s. 6d.

Mr. Lockhart is to be most warmly congratulated on this biography. Without self-assertion and with a clear and quiet style he has presented a portrait of Lord Halifax interesting both for the character of the man and the importance of his work. This volume is primarily concerned with ecclesiastical controversy. It covers the war period; and the war passes by

only as a background to controversy. This fact alone will give an idea of the intensity of Lord Halifax's ideals. The whole life contains so fully the best of English tradition that, though both long, serious, and detailed, it is a great pleasure to read.

VULGAR SOCIETY: THE ROMANTIC CAREER OF JAMES TISSOT. By James Laver. *Constable*. 10s. 6d.

"Modernity of handling," Mr. Laver writes, "is resented and mistrusted by any conservative society. Modernity of subject is a delicate compliment to itself." That is a very true saying, which at once gives Tissot his due, and accounts for his contemporary fame and subsequent oblivion. Mr. Laver's judgments are all just as sensibly balanced. The siege of Paris and the commune, exile and fame in England, a mysterious mistress, tragedy, remorse, and a journey to the Holy Land; such are the outward events in the life of one who, though no great man, created an illuminating pattern of human behaviour, of which his pictures are a pleasant record.

LEAVES FROM MY UNWRITTEN DIARY. By Sir Harry Preston. *Hutchinson*. 12s. 6d.

The late Sir Harry Preston spent most of a full life running hotels, attending sporting matches, and meeting the eminent. The names of his friends—men of the stage, sportsmen, writers, politicians, financiers, even Royalty—fill pages, and out of a seemingly inexhaustible memory he told stories, often if not always new, about most of them. Frankly an uncritical anecdotal medley, it displays its author's prides and prejudices with unfailing vigour.

LOUIS XVI AND MARIE ANTOINETTE. By Nesta H. Webster. *Constable*. 18s.

Mrs. Webster mentions the curious fact that no "complete biography" of Louis XVI has been written. She makes good the deficiency in a careful and fair-minded account of his career and shows just how far it was influenced by his wife. A king who was in advance of his time in liberal ideas; a kindly, well-intentioned queen had to pay for the sins of others. The book is one of a series, each of which takes up a different standpoint.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FUTURE.

By John Langdon-Davies. *Routledge*. 10s. 6d. First the darkness of war, then the dawn. Democracy is doomed by the machine, but the ultimate triumph of communism over fascism will bring the brighter day of peace,

plenty, leisure, and population control. After standardization, individuality will be State-encouraged. Mr. Langdon-Davies only slightly qualifies his economic determinism, and his air of knowing all about "the inexorable laws of nature" makes his prophecies seem already as good as come true. Interesting, with salt to season.

LITERARY

NOT UNDER FORTY. By Willa Cather. *Cassell*. 5s.

Miss Willa Cather's rather too gossipy little essays deal with writers, including Flaubert, Katherine Mansfield, and Thomas Mann, whom she strangely considers to be of interest only to those over forty. Several record personal encounters, of which the most interesting, though it is a little patronizingly described, is one with Flaubert's niece, Caroline. In the *Novel Demeublé* Miss Cather protests against the naturalistic realism of much contemporary literature.

THE STORY OF A NOVEL. By Thomas Wolfe. *Heinemann*. 5s.

Mr. Wolfe's fragment of literary autobiography will interest every reader of his *Look Homeward, Angel*, and *Of Time and the River*. He tells of his wild, volcanic outpouring of the material of these books and their yet-unpublished successors, and of the sensations and feelings accompanying the process. The most hopeful sign for a writer certainly touched with genius is his declared realization that not the extent but the depth and intensity of human experience is vital.

HAVE YOU ANYTHING TO DECLARE? A Note Book with Commentaries by Maurice Baring. *Heinemann*. 8s. 6d.

Mr. Baring declares his literary luggage. This is an anthology not made but of natural growth; Mr. Baring takes the notes of a lifetime's reading as they come; sets down without rearrangement scraps of Homer, Horace, Dante, Catullus, Heine, Racine, Goethe, Chateaubriand, Ford, Pushkin, and Shakespeare; and interrupts the flow of notes and memories to give a translation (often his own), to recall a parallel, or to make a comment. The anthology of a man-about-literature.

A CHRONICLE OF ENGLISH LITERATURE. By S. P. B. Mais. *Heinemann*. 7s. 6d. A run through the shelves of the traditional gentleman's library for those who have not yet acquired it. Mr. Mais starts with Chaucer and

ends with W. H. Auden, taking in on the way all the great and near-great names, and giving dates, main works, biographies for beginners, and the ineluctable quotations.

MISCELLANEOUS

CHRIST LEGENDS. By Selma Lagerlöf.

Translated from the Swedish by Velma Swanston Howard. With illustrations by Horace J. Knowles. *Werner Laurie*. 7s. 6d.

Those who are acquainted with the work of Selma Lagerlöf will know how delicately she can blend Swedish folk-lore or history with her own imaginative genius. But she has also been attracted, even in her early work, by the East, and there is an Oriental touch in some of these tales which gives a delightful quality to their intrinsic medieval simplicity. Particularly attractive is the story of the wicked Drought which sat at the well-side biding its hour of triumph.

THROUGH DARKEST PONDELAYO. By

Serena Livingstone-Stanley. *Chatto and Windus*. 6s.

This amusing burlesque record of the adventures of two English ladies on a cannibal island has been written and produced in the authentic tradition of the Edwardian travelogue. The result is an excellent—if slightly drawn-out—joke, reinforced by really wittily faked photographs.

CIRCUS PARADE. By John S. Clarke.

Batsford. 7s. 6d.

Every circus *aficionado* should read this book of circus lore, written by a man who, although now a lecturer and author, was rough-riding at ten and training wild beasts at twenty-two. It is fortunate that Mr. Clarke, after his unique connection with the circus, should be able to record the secrets of ring technique in so readable a form. The text is splendidly supported by numerous photographs.

MUSIC

MUSIC OBSERVED. By A. H. Fox-Strangeways. *Methuen*. 6s.

Mr. Steuart Wilson has compiled this anthology from Mr. Fox-Strangeways's weekly articles on music in the *Observer*. The range of subjects is wide, varying from Indian folk-song to "Singing and Whistling." The style is always easy and pleasant to read; and there is in the author's treatment of every subject a distinctive note of solid common sense, a refusal of partisanship, and a great will to

accept difficulties and make the best of them. "Amateur and Professional" is the perfect statement of (what seems to us) the pessimistic view of English music. It is a tribute to the writer, and typical, that others will find in it only an excellently fair and balanced statement of the facts.

PHILOSOPHY & RELIGION

LIFE HERE AND NOW. By Arthur Ponsonby. *Allen and Unwin*. 10s. 6d.

Lord Ponsonby, having discovered that a happy life is brief in the living and long in the memory, finds the secret of happiness in the conquest of time. By a study of our "Sense of Duration," that sense by which objective time is made real to us, and the effect of action upon that sense, we should so regulate our lives that each moment is filled and made to fly. Lord Ponsonby analyses the facts clearly and thoughtfully, but he makes no very memorable discovery, and his rule of life, which makes the control of time the ultimate object of action, could only mean an uncomfortable feeling of bustle for the man of action and sheer torture for the contemplative man.

HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT IN GERMANY (1789-1815). By Reinhold Aris. *Allen and Unwin*. 15s.

The French Revolution and the rise of Napoleon produced an immense crop of contradictory political philosophies in the three hundred independent States whose inhabitants spoke German. Dr. Aris picks his way through this luxuriant jungle with commendable impartiality and assurance, from Kant through Novalis to the first Prussian nationalists. But he is careful continually to draw his readers' attention to the fact that, despite the rich variety of this material, average Germans devoted as little time to political thought then as now. Further instalments of this judicious analysis of an involved subject are promised, to end with the year 1914.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY. Edited by A. Trevor Barker. Volume Four. *Rider*. 15s.

This fourth volume in Mr. Trevor Barker's new edition covers the years 1882-3 of Madame Blavatsky's astonishingly fertile and varied output, and consists mainly of contributions to *The Theosophist*. The book is a bewildering medley—"Singing Animalcules," "The Harmonics of Smell," "Homoeopathy and Mesmerism," "Do the Rishis Exist?" are

just a few titles picked at random from the four-page list of contents—but students will find it a mine of curious ideas mingled with pungent comments and echoes of many once-vehement controversies.

POETRY

THE EMPEROR HEART. By Laurence Whistler. *Heinemann*. 5s.

The King's Medallist possesses a certain talent for writing elegant and colourful verse, and delicacy and sensitiveness that is apt, however, to become diffused into the vague and ethereal imagery reminiscent of Shelley in his less happy moments. Mr. Whistler is seen at his best in *The Glass Chandelier*, which shows a pretty and original fancy; he is fond of churchyards and old country mansions; his numerous love-poems are impregnated with a nostalgia for the womb, for sleep, or for death; in another mood he exhibits an exuberant delight in natural beauty.

TRAVEL

RETURN TO MALAYA. By R. H. Bruce Lockhart. *Putnam*. 10s. 6d.

In his *Memoirs of a British Agent*, Mr. Bruce Lockhart declared he would never see the East again. But Kipling is thicker than water. The author planned a sentimental journey. Numerous changes have transformed the East since he was there last, and the author has written a book which will appeal principally to those readers familiar with the scenes he describes. In his delight at finding himself back in Sumatra, Java, and the Malay Peninsula, he sometimes forgets the uninstructed guest at his table, and talks "shop" with his old friends. When he recollects himself, he can be very entertaining.

THE NILE FROM SOURCE TO EGYPT.

By Emil Ludwig. *Allen and Unwin*. 16s.

The well-known biographer here traces the course, adventures, history, and influences of the world's longest river (if the Missouri-Mississippi is disqualified). Recollection of his previous successes may have tempted him to anthropomorphize his subject; by yielding to the temptation, he has gravely damaged a splendid theme and an interesting book. The thirty photographs which accompany the text are exceptionally romantic and exciting; and it is impossible to deny these epithets to the book itself, in spite of its exasperating fault.

THE MAKING OF MODERN TURKEY.

By Sir Harry Luke. *Macmillan*. 10s. 6d.

To Sir Harry Luke's descriptions of Near Eastern life there is apparently no end. In the eastern end of the Mediterranean he has served the greater part of his career, and has thoroughly imbibed the atmosphere which used to be called Levantine but which is now being split up into component elements. Of the modern Turkey he gives a wealth of historical background, and though he seems sometimes to lament the passing of the old, more picturesque ways, he salutes the Kemalists as a new force which is uncovering the Turkish nation, buried for five long centuries.

THREE DESERTS. By C. S. Jarvis. *John Murray*. 10s. 6d.

The three deserts which are described in these racy pages are all in Egypt—the north and south Libyan Deserts, and the Wilderness of Sinai. In these monotonous, inhospitable places the lot of Major C. S. Jarvis has been cast ever since the war. He retired from the Governorship of the Sinai Province only a few months ago. This is an incandescent book: it throws real light on the dark places.

THE ARYAN PATH

Commencement of New Volume

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Vol. VIII

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FORTHCOMING BOOKS

IT is early yet, and publishing plans for the Spring are still indeterminate. But a number of important books are announced already for this month.

Among the books of memoirs to be published this month are Mr. Laurence Housman's *The Unexpected Years* by Messrs. Cape, Sir Ronald Storrs's *Orientalisms* by Messrs. Ivor Nicholson and Watson and Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell's *My Fill of Days* by Messrs. Faber on January 21st. Messrs. Macmillan announce *Straw Without Bricks* by E. M. Delafield, her memories of her journey in Russia, and Messrs. Hutchinson, during the second week of this month, hope to publish *Buffets and Rewards*, by Felix Weingartner.

Messrs. Chapman and Hall are to publish *The Letters of Lenin*, edited and translated with notes and a biographical introduction by Elizabeth Hill and Doris Mudie. A life of George the Third by C. E. Vulliamy, with the title *Royal George*, is announced by Messrs. Cape, and one of his father, the Prince of Wales, *Poor Fred, The People's Prince*, by Sir George Young, by the Oxford University Press.

Several biographies of Augustus Caesar will no doubt accompany his two thousandth anniversary this year. The first of these, by Dr. Bernard Allen, is coming from Messrs. Macmillan this month.

The Far East in World Politics, by S. F. Hudson, will be published by the Oxford University Press.

Messrs. Allen and Unwin announce *Anarchy or Hierarchy* by Prof. de Madariaga for this month, and a study of communist ideals by Stephen Spender, *Forward From Liberalism*, is to be published by Messrs. Gollancz.

Messrs. Allen and Unwin announce for this month a composite volume *The British Civil Servant* by Dr. W. A. Robson, Prof. Ernest Barker, Harold Nicolson, M.P., Sir E. Simon, and others, edited by Dr. W. A. Robson. They will also publish a volume of Essays, *Roger Fry and Other Essays*, by Howard Hannay. On January 14th Messrs. Heinemann will publish *Art and Society* by Herbert Read.

The Oxford University Press will publish this month *The Notebooks and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, edited by Humphry House,

comprising his early notebooks, journal 1868-75, lecture notes, sermons, and drawings. The same publishers announce several volumes of literary letters: *The Letters of Fanny Browne to Fanny Keats* 1820-24, edited by Fred Edgecumbe, *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth*, 1806-20, in two volumes edited by E. de Selincourt, and following on the earlier letters published last year, and *The Letters of Hartley Coleridge*, edited by Grace Evelyn Griggs and Earl Leslie Griggs. Messrs. Jonathan Cape announce *The Muse in Chains*, a study of the history of English as a branch of academic learning in England, by Stephen Potter, and Messrs. Nelson will publish *Commonsense about the Drama*, by L. A. G. Strong.

The *Poems* of Isaac Rosenberg, long expected from Messrs. Chatto and Windus, will appear this month. Messrs. Dent announce a volume of Clifford Dymont's poems *Straight or Curly*, and Messrs. Arthur Barker, for January 18th, *Don J. Ewan* by Humbert Wolfe.

Fiction this month will include a new novel by Wyndham Lewis, *Revenge for Love*, to be published by Messrs. Cassell. A new book of short stories by Stella Benson is announced by Messrs. Constable, and will be entitled *People are Fascinating*. Messrs. Jonathan Cape are publishing Arthur Calder-Marshall's *Pie in the Sky*, and also *Child of Light*, by Mrs. J. L. Garvin. Messrs. Heinemann will publish *The Lady and the Arsenic*, by Joseph Shearing, on January 14th, and on the same date Messrs. Methuen will publish Pearl S. Buck's sequel to *The Exile*, *Fighting Angel*. *Dead Man Leading*, by V. S. Pritchett, and *Soldiers' Wind*, by James Hanley, are both to be published by Messrs. Chatto and Windus, who will also publish *The Stranger Prince* by Margaret Irwin, on January 7th. A volume of short stories by Kay Boyle, *White Horses of Vienna and Other Stories* will be published on January 14th by Messrs. Faber and Faber. Messrs. Allen and Unwin will publish *Great Trade Route* by Ford Madox Ford. Messrs. Cobden-Sanderson announce *By-road*, by Adrian Bell. *War with the News*, by Carel Čapek is to be published by Messrs. Allen and Unwin, and a new novel *Here To-day*, by Pamela Hansford Johnson, by Messrs. Chapman and Hall.